

# The Ramayana of Valmiki

A Complete Modern English Translation

BOOK - IV



Translated by : Hari Prasad Shastri





THE  
RAMAYANA  
OF  
VALMIKI

*Translated by*  
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KISHKINDHA KANDA

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BOOK IV.  
KISHKINDHA KANDA



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## CHAPTER I

*Rama describes the Spring and the Sentiments it evokes in him*

DIRECTING his steps towards Lake Pampa, which was covered with lotuses of various kinds, Rama, who was accompanied by Lakshmana, his mind troubled, began to lament. Beholding that lake, his heart was filled with delight, and under the sway of love, he said to the son of Sumitra :—

“ O Lakshmana, how beautiful is the Lake Pampa with its pure and limpid waves, its lotuses and flowering water-lilies, its many kinds of trees. Oh ! How delightful ! O Saumitri, observe the Pampa Woods, how pleasant they are to look upon, those magnificent trees resembling crested mountains. I am overwhelmed and stricken with grief on recollecting Bharata’s distress and the abduction of Sita.

“ Though my heart is heavy, yet the Pampa lake is still able to charm me, with its ravishing woods luxuriant with every kind of blossom and its fresh and delicious waters. The month of flowering lotuses<sup>1</sup> lends it an extreme beauty ; serpents and wild animals frequent it, whilst deer and birds abound. The thick grass, of a deep emerald hue, is sprinkled with different flowers that have fallen from the trees and resembles a bright carpet. On every side the tops of the trees, bending under the weight of their blossom, are wholly hidden by the creepers with their flowering fronds.

“ O Lakshmana, it is the season of auspicious breezes and tender love, the fragrant spring month when flowers and fruit are brought to birth on the trees. See how lovely are these flowering woods, O Saumitri, showering down a rain of petals, like water from the clouds.

“ In the enchanting valleys on the escarpments, innumerable trees, shaken by the wind, scatter their blossom on the earth. O Lakshmana, see how the breeze, agitating the myriad branches

<sup>1</sup> Lit. Padmas, Utpalas, Jhashas.



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of the flowering trees, seems to play with the blossom that has fallen or is still on the trees. The God of the Wind frolics to the accompaniment of the humming of bees and to the song of the amorous nightingale, desiring, as it were, to make the trees dance. Emerging from the mountain caves, the wind gives forth a kind of music, shaking the trees violently from side to side, causing the extreme tips of their branches to meet, uniting them one with the other. The zephyr with soft caressing breath, diffusing the perfume of sandalwood, dispels all fatigue.

“Agitated by the wind, these trees seem to add their voices to the humming of the bees amidst the soft and fragrant groves.

“On the enchanting mountain plateaus, the crags, whose points touch, resplendent with large trees bearing beautiful flowers, sparkle with beauty, and the trees, tossed by the airy currents that stir them, their crests covered with blossom and crowned with bees, seem about to break into song.

“See, on every side, the marvellous blossoming of the golden Karnikara trees, resembling men robed in silk! This season of Spring, O Lakshmana, with its choir of birds of every kind revives the pain caused by Sita’s absence. In this overwhelming grief, pangs of love torment me. The gay trilling of the cuckoo tantalizes me; the joyful Datyuhaka bird that sings from the waterfalls of the forest increases my pain, O Lakshmana! Formerly when she heard its voice in our hermitage, my beloved, intoxicated with love and happiness, would call to me.

“See how the birds of varied plumage, giving forth every kind of note, seek refuge on all sides amongst the trees, bushes and creepers! The females accompanied by the males flock together according to their kind and rejoice; intoxicated by the Bhringaraja’s exultant cries, they chirrup melodiously. Here, in the home of Sita, the assembled birds are made merry by the joyous song of the Datyuhaka responding to the cuckoo’s call.

“The rustling of the trees rekindles the fire of my love, of which the bunches of the Ashoka blooms are the fuel, the humming of the bees the crackling, and the buds the golden tongues of flame.

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"This fire of Spring is consuming me! Nay, far from that lady of lovely eyelashes, beautiful looks and gentle speech, I cannot survive, O Saumitri! The season that brings delight to the woods is the time she loved, and beyond all, she was enamoured of the forest echoing to the call of the cuckoo on every side, O Irreproachable Hero!

"The tender feelings I bear for my sweet One and the delights of Spring that increase them are a burning fire that will soon consume me utterly. I shall not live long separated from my spouse; the beauty of these trees increases the pangs of my love. Being unable to see Sita any more intensifies my anguish, whilst the presence of Spring causes the sweat of desire to break forth on me. Thinking of that lady, whose eyes resemble a doe's, grief holds me in thrall; the cruel Spring breeze from the woods tortures me, O Saumitri!

"Here and there, peacocks dance, spreading their brilliant wings in the breeze, and their tails, decorated with eyes, resemble crystal lattices. The females surrounding them are intoxicated with desire and this strengthens the love with which I am filled.

"See, O Lakshmana, on the mountain plateau, how the peacock dances and how the peahen, her heart intoxicated with joy, closely follows him! He spreads his radiant wings and his cries seem to mock my pain, for in the forest his loved one has not been carried away by a titan and he can dance in these enchanting groves with his tender love. In this month of flowers, in Sita's absence, my stay here is unendurable!

"See, O Lakshmana, love is found even among lower animals! At this moment, the peahen is ardently attracted to the steps of the male; even thus would the large-eyed daughter of Janaka follow my steps with renewed love, had she not been borne away.

"O Lakshmana, the flowers that bear down the forest branches with their weight in the autumn will produce no fruit for me and, though so lovely, will fall rotting to the ground with their swarms of bees.

"The birds at this time, in joyous flight, carolling in love, seem to call to one another, invoking deep transports of desire in me. If the Spring also reigns where my loved one, Sita,



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dwells, who has now fallen under the sway of another, she will be sharing my ardour. Yet if the Spring has not reached that place where she is, how will that dark-eyed lady be able to go on living in my absenec? If this season has not come to where my gentle love resides, what will that fair-limbed lady do, who has been overpowered by a mighty adversary? My youthful and beloved consort, whose eyes resemble lotus petals and who is gentle of speech, will certainly yield up her life at the first breath of Spring. In my heart, I feel assured that the gentle Sita will not be able to survive separation from me. Devotion to Vaidehi invades my entire being and my love is wholly centred on her.

“When I remember my gentle love, this caressing breeze, so fresh and cool, carrying the fragrance of flowers, is like a burning fire to me. The God of the Wind, who was ever welcome when Sita was present, is to-day a source of pain to me. In her absence, that bird flying through the air emitting cries, the crow now perching on a tree, makes a delightful sound.<sup>1</sup> This winged creature will prove a messenger and bring my remembrance to the mind of the large-eyed Vaidehi.

“Listen, O Lakshmana, to the birds’ intoxicating chorus of love, as they warble in the flowery crested trees. That bee suddenly flying towards the young green shoots of the Tilaka tree, blown by the breeze, is like a lover trembling with desire. The Ashoka tree, that increases the torment of lovers, rises with its plumes of flowers waving in the wind, to tantalize me. Look, O Lakshmana, at the flowering mango trees, resembling those who are distracted by the pangs of love!

“O Saumitri, O Lion among Men! See how amidst the magnificent range of trees that grow on the borders of Lake Pampa, the Kinneras wander about on every side! Observe those Nalina flowers of subtle scent, O Lakshmana, gleaming on the water like unto the sun about to rise. See the calm surface of the Pampa Lake, fragrant with lotus and blue water-lilies, frequented by swans and waterfowl, and the stamens of the lotus flowers, bright as the dawn, that the bees have scattered on the waves.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to a crow cawing at the time of Rama’s wedding, indicating that he would shortly be separated from her; now the sound signifies reunion is near.

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"How the Lake Pampa sparkles ! Waterfowl abound there in every season ; how wonderful are its woodland glades ! It is enchanting with its herds of elephants and deer, that love to come and bathe in it. The water-lilies rocking on the breast of the limpid waves, the waters whipped by the impetuous wind sparkle with beauty, O Lakshmana.

"Far from Vaidehi, whose eyes are as large as the petals of of the lotus, who ever loved the water-lilies, life has no attraction for me. O Perfidious Kama, now I am no longer able to rejoin her, thou seekest to evoke in me the memory of that sweet lady, whose speech was a thousand times sweeter still ; it were possible to bear the love I feel for her, if the Spring with its flowers and trees did not increase my torment ! Those things that enchanted me, when I was with her, in her absence, have no further charm for me. On seeing the petals of the lotus cup, I say to myself : ' These resemble Sita's eyes ', O Lakshmana. The fragrant breeze, blowing through the stamens of the lotus flowers and the trees, resembles her breath.

"O Saumitri, see how marvellous is the brilliance of the flowering trunk of the Karnikara on the ridges of the mountain to the right of Lake Pampa. Those ravishing trees with their flowers, stripped of leaves, seem to set the mountain ridges on fire ; whilst those growing on the banks of the lake, that irrigates them, give off a delicate perfume.

"Malatis, Mallikas, Karaviras and Padmas in flower, Ketaki, Sinduvra and Vasanti trees, Matulinga, Purna and Kunda bushes on every side ; Shiribilva, Madhuka, Vanjula, Bakula, Champaka, Tilaka, Nagavriksha, Padmaka, Ashoka with their azure flowers, Lodhra, Simhakesara, Pinjara trees are seen everywhere. Ankola, Kuranta, Shurnaka, Paribhadra, Cuta, Patali, Kovidara, Mucukunda and Arjuna trees spread their blossom on the slope of the mountain. Rakta-kurava, Ketaka, Uddalaka, Shirisha, Shingshapa, Dhava, Shalmali, Kingshuka, Kurubaka with its red flowers, Tinisha, Naktamala, Candaka, Syandana, Hintala, Tilaka and Nagavriksha, these blossoming trees are entwined with flowering spiked creepers.

"See, O Saumitri, how they crowd together on the banks of Lake Pampa, their branches waving in the wind ; the creepers



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seem to be pursuing each other, resembling lovely women at play.

“The breeze passes through the trees from crag to crag, from wood to wood. Amongst them, some are in full flower and give off a soft fragrance, others, covered with buds, have a sombre air. What sweetness ! How pleasant ! What blossom!

“Amidst these trees on the borders of Lake Pampa, the bees seem to be resting in the heart of the flowers, staying a moment, then flying off again, quickly alighting elsewhere, greedy for nectar.

“The fortunate earth is heaped with masses of blossom that has fallen on the ground, resembling the covering of a couch. On the mountain sides unrolls a brilliant carpet of gold and red flowers of every kind, O Saumitri. At the end of winter all these trees are now in full flower, O Lakshmana. In this month of blossom, the plants open, vying with each other, and the trees, where the six-legged insects hum, seem to challenge one another, manifesting a great brilliance, their branches crowned with flowers.

“The Karandava bird plunging into the limpid waves, disporting itself with its mate, seems in some way to inspire love. Like that of the Mandakini, the beauty of the Lake Pampa is enchanting ; its perfections are famed throughout the world and, in proximity, ravish the heart.

“If I might find my gentle Love once again, and we could take up our abode here, I should not even covet Indra’s realm or regret Ayodhya. Here, on these charming slopes, I should sport with her and neither my thoughts nor desires would lead me away.

“In the absence of my beloved, the trees of these woods, wholly covered with every kind of flower, almost deprive me of my reason.

“Gaze on this lake of limpid waters, O Saumitri, which is covered with lotuses, frequented by the Chakravaka bird, the abode of Karandavas, abounding in pelicans, herons and wild beasts and re-echoing to the warbling of birds; verily Lake Pampa is a paradise ! The myriad birds with their delightful antics and the memory of that youthful woman, my beloved, whose face shines like the moon, whose eyes resemble lotuses,

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all inflame my desire. I, who am separated from Sita, whose eyes resemble the doe's and the gazelle's, on seeing them disporting themselves there, am troubled, as it were.

"On that pleasant hillside, filled with flocks of birds, intoxicated with love, might I but see my gentle One, I should be content. O Saumitri, I should certainly live anew if Sita of slender waist were inhaling the auspicious air of Lake Pampa at my side. Fortunate is he, O Lakshmana, who drinks that pleasant air from the woods of Lake Pampa that carries the fragrance of the lotus and dispels all grief.

"How is that youthful woman, whose eyes resemble lotus petals, the beloved daughter of Janaka, able to bear the existence of a slave? What shall I say to that virtuous king, the faithful Janaka, when, in the presence of the people, he asks me if all is well with Sita?

"She who followed me to the dreary forest whither my father had banished me, that Sita, fixed in her duty, where is she, my beloved, now? Separated from her, how, in mine adversity, O Lakshmana, shall I be able to endure life? I am losing my reason! When shall I hear the incomparable voice of Vaidehi again? Though she found nought but misfortune in the forest, yet that youthful woman, in her tenderness, conversed sweetly with me, who was consumed with love, as if she had ceased to be unhappy and was full of joy. How shall I, in Ayodhya, reply to Kaushalya, O Prince, when that venerable queen asks me: 'Where is my daughter-in-law and what has befallen her?'

"O Lakshmana, return and seek out Bharata, our devoted brother; as for me, I can no longer continue living without the daughter of Janaka."

Thus did the magnanimous Rama lament, as if deprived of support, and his brother, Lakshmana, in judicious and measured words, answered him, saying:—"O Rama, summon up thy courage and be happy, do not grieve, O Thou, the Best of Men. Those in thy condition have nothing with which to reproach themselves and should not give way to despair. Calling to remembrance the grief caused by separation from that being who is dear to thee, banish all excessive attachment. In proximity to intense heat, even a damp net catches fire. Though



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he descend into hell or yet lower, Ravana will in no way survive his deed, O Beloved Rama. Let us first seek out this wicked demon ; either he shall yield up Sita or he is lost. Should Ravana descend into the womb of Diti<sup>1</sup> with Sita, I shall slay him if he does not restore her to thee. Return to thy normal state, My Noble Friend, and throw off these mournful thoughts. Assuredly no success is gained by those who abandon their undertakings without making due efforts. Exertion is a powerful weapon, O Lord, there is no power superior to it. With effort, nothing is impossible in this world. Resolute men do not fail in their pursuits. By our efforts alone we shall recover Janaki. Do not permit thyself to be dominated by thy love or thy grief ; cast it behind thee. Hast thou perchance forgotten the greatness of thy soul, the fixity of thy purpose and character ? ”

Thus spurred on by Lakshmana, Rama, who had allowed himself to be overcome by sorrow, banished his grief and distraction and regained his valour.

Calm and brave beyond imagining, Rama crossed the Pampa that was full of charm, enchanting with its trees of waving branches. When he had explored the whole forest with its waterfalls and ravines, the magnanimous Rama, agitated and overcome with grief, set out with Lakshmana, and with the joyous gait of an elephant intoxicated with Mada juice, the intrepid and magnanimous Saumitri, with rapid strides went on his way serenely, consoling Rama by his fidelity and valour.

As they neared the vicinity of Rishyamuka, the King of the Monkeys observed those heroes of unusual aspect and, despite his courage, trembled but made no move towards them. That magnanimous monkey, who walked with the dignity of an elephant, seeing those two brothers advancing, was filled with extreme apprehension and became distracted with fear.

In their terror at the sight of Rama and Lakshmana, those monkeys concealed themselves in that pleasant solitude, the refuge of the Deer of the Trees.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The bowels of the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Monkeys.

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### CHAPTER 2

#### *Sugriva sends Hanuman to interview Rama*

BEHOLDING those two illustrious brothers, Rama and Lakshmana, bearing great swords in their hands, Sugriva grew anxious and, with a beating heart, glancing round on every side, could find no place in which to take refuge. Seeing those two heroes, he moved about restlessly from place to place and, in his terror, felt himself about to swoon. Exceedingly perturbed, the virtuous Sugriva with his companions began to ponder on the varying aspects of the situation and that Chief of the Monkey Tribe, pointing out those two warriors, Rama and Lakshmana, to his ministers, said :—

“Without doubt, Bali has sent these two heroes to this wood, which is inaccessible to him, and they, assuming robes of bark, have come hither and have penetrated this stronghold.”

Then those counsellors of Sugriva, perceiving the two skilful archers, sped away from that ridge to a higher crest, slipping off hurriedly behind their leader and thereafter they encircled that King of the Forest Dwellers. In close formation, they leapt from crag to crag, causing the rocks to tremble with their bounds. Jumping with extreme force, they broke down the flowering trees growing in that altitude and those amazing monkeys, leaping in every direction on that great mountain, struck terror in the hearts of the deer, the wild cats and the tigers.

Thereafter, the counsellors of Sugriva, assembling on that Indra of mountains, gathered round their sovereign with joined palms, and the eloquent Hanuman addressed Sugriva, who in his terror suspected some project of his brother's to be afoot, saying :—

“Let all banish fear of Bali ! There is nothing to inspire terror on this, the highest of mountains. I do not see any sign here of that cruel Bali of evil aspect, who has filled thee



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with apprehension and caused thy flight, O Bull among Monkeys. That cunning creature whom thou fearest, thy wicked elder brother, is not here, O Friend : I see no cause for thine apprehension. It is evident, O Plavamgama, that thy simian nature is asserting itself, since, by giving way to distraction of mind, thou art not able to see clearly. Thou art intelligent, experienced, able to read the expression of others and fully prepared for any eventuality, but a prince who gives way to agitation is not able to forestall any."

Hearing Hanuman's pregnant utterance, Sugriva answered him with greater calm saying :—

" Seeing those two long-armed warriors of large eyes, armed with bows and swords, resembling the offspring of the Gods, who would not be afraid ? I deem these two powerful heroes to be the messengers of Bali. Kings have many friends, and I do not feel able to trust them. Those who are cautious invariably find the weak spot in those who are over-confident. Bali is crafty in every enterprise. Those monarchs who are well-informed are able to overcome their enemies and should spy out their actions with the help of ordinary men.

" Go, O Plavamgama, in the guise of a common man and find out the intentions of these two strangers. Study their gestures, their manners and their speech ; observe their attitude and how they are disposed.

" By praise and repeated courtesies inspire them with confidence. Interrogate those two archers in my name, O Bull amongst Monkeys, and enquire of them for what reason they have come to these woods. Discover if their purpose be honest, O Plavamgama ; their speech and manner will betray them if they are ill-intentioned."

Thus commanded by Sugriva, the Son of Maruta prepared to seek out Rama and Lakshmana.

His master, through extreme fear, having rendered himself unapproachable, the monkey Hanuman of noble attributes, listening to his words with respect, answered : " Be it so ! " and went forth to meet the mighty Rama and Lakshmana who accompanied him.

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### CHAPTER 3

#### *Hanuman's Meeting with Rama*

AT the command of the magnanimous Sugriva, Hanuman, with one bound, left the Mountain Rishyamuka and placed himself in the path of the two Raghavas.

Discarding his monkey form, Hanuman, the son of Maruta, by the power of illusion, assumed the guise of a wandering monk and, in gentle and pleasing tones, addressed those two brothers with humility, paying obeisance to them.

Approaching those two heroes, that Foremost of Monkeys praised them as they deserved, offering them every courtesy and in accord with Sugriva's wish spoke graciously to them, saying :—

“ O Ascetics of renowned penance, who are full of faith and valour and who resemble the Rishis and the Gods, why have you come to this region, sowing fear amongst the herds of deer and other denizens of the forest, surveying the trees on every side that grow on the borders of Pampa, that lake of sparkling waves, the splendour of which you enhance with your radiance, O Heroes of Great Daring ?

“ O Valiant Strangers, who are you, whose skin gleams like gold and who are clad in robes of bark, possessing strong arms, you who are sighing deeply and whose sight inspires fear in all beings ? You have the air of lions or warriors who are full of courage and heroism, armed as you are with bows, resembling Indra's, the Destroyers of your Foes ?

“ Full of majesty and beauty, mighty as great bulls, your arms resembling the trunks of elephants, radiant, the first among men, youthful, illumining the king of the mountains with your effulgence, you who are worthy of ruling kingdoms and like unto the Gods, what purpose brings you here ? O Heroes, whose eyes are as large as lotus petals, who wear your matted locks coiled like crowns on your heads, who resemble each

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other, have you come hither from the celestial region? Verily the sun and moon have descended to earth of their own free will. O Broad-chested Warriors, ye who are men, yet have the aspect of divine beings, whose shoulders are like unto a lion's, who are endowed with great strength and resemble two bulls intoxicated with desire, whose large and massive arms look like clubs that should be adorned with every kind of ornament, yet bear none, it seems that you are both worthy of ruling the whole earth, whose decorations are the Vindhya and Meru mountains with their lakes and forests. How beautiful are your two shining bows, glistening with perfumed paste, covered with gold and shining like the mace of Indra; the two quivers also, filled with sharp death-dealing and formidable arrows resembling hissing snakes; your two swords of immense length and size, encrusted with fine gold that gleam like serpents that have just cast their slough! But why do ye not answer me?

“Sugriva is the name of that virtuous King of the Monkeys, that hero banished by his brother, who roams the earth in great distress. I have come here under the orders of that magnanimous one, the Chief of the Great Monkeys. The illustrious Sugriva desires your friendship. Know me to be his minister, a monkey, the son of Pavana, ranging where I please and coming here under the guise of a wandering monk from the Rishyamuka Mountain in order to please him.”

Having addressed those two heroes, Rama and Lakshmana, in discreet and courteous terms, Hanuman fell silent and hearing that speech, the blessed Rama, delighted, addressed Lakshmana who stood beside him, saying:—

“This is the minister of the King of the Monkeys, the magnanimous Sugriva, whom I seek. O Saumitri, answer Sugriva's counsellor who is eloquent and warm-hearted and the subduer of his foes in courteous terms. Only one versed in the Rig-Veda and, who is conversant with the Yajur and the Sama Vedas, would speak thus. He has studied grammar thoroughly, and though he has spoken at length, it has been void of error. I see naught to offend, either in his mouth, his eyes, his brow, limbs, or attitude. His speech is neither lacking in fulness, depth, assurance or distinction; his voice



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issues from his breast in clear modulated tones. He expresses himself with admirable felicity without any hesitation ; his tone is harmonious and moves the heart agreeably. What foe, having drawn his sword, would not be disarmed by the charm of that voice that enunciates each syllable so perfectly. O Irreproachable Prince, the king who employs messengers gifted with such talent is certain to succeed in all his undertakings, since they are enhanced at the very outset, by such eloquence."

On this, Saumitri addressed that eloquent minister of Sugriva's in well-chosen words, saying :—" O Sage, we have been told of the great attributes of Sugriva and are at this moment looking for that King of the Monkeys. That which he commands we will carry out on thine instructions, O Excellent Hanuman."

When he heard this gracious speech, that monkey, born of Pavana, who wished nothing more than that Sugriva should triumph, resolved to bring about a friendly alliance between Rama and his master.

### CHAPTER 4

*Hanuman bears Rama and Lakshmana into the presence of Sugriva*

LISTENING to Lakshmana's courteous words and marking the feeling of goodwill towards his master, Hanuman, deeming Rama would be willing to assist him, joyfully reflected that Sugriva's triumph was already assured.

He thought : " Undoubtedly the magnanimous Sugriva will not fail to regain his kingdom, for here is one who will enable him to accomplish his design."

Then the wholly delighted and eloquent Hanuman, the Foremost of Monkeys, said to Rama:—"What brings thee with thy younger brother to this perilous and inaccessible forest ?"

On this enquiry, Lakshmana, prompted by his brother, related the history of Rama, the son of Dasaratha, to him.

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“There was a king named Dasaratha, who was illustrious, fixed in his duty and, according to the law, the protector of the four castes. Without a foe, he himself hating none, he appeared to all living beings to be a second Brahma.

“The firstborn son of Dasaratha, who possessed every excellent quality, the refuge of all, endowed with royal virtues and of great majesty, was banished from his dominion and obedient to the behests of his sire, has come to dwell in the forest. Submitting to the paternal decree, he was followed by his consort, Sita, as the glorious sun by the sunset glow at evening.

“My name is Lakshmana. I, who am inferior to him in every respect, am his brother and accompany him as his servant. This dutiful prince, who is ever mindful of what should be done, is extremely learned and this hero, who spends his life in promoting the welfare of all beings, who is worthy of happiness and honour, deprived of supreme power, passes his days in the forest. A titan, who was able to change his form at will, carried off his consort, she being alone, and her abductor is unknown to us.

“The son of Diti, Danu, who, through a curse, had been forced to assume the form of a titan, imparted the name of Sugriva, the King of the Monkeys, to us. Now I have answered thine enquiries fully in all sincerity; Rama and I both seek the help of Sugriva. The distributor of all wealth, he, who has reached the peak of glory and was formerly the guardian of the worlds, has come to seek Sugriva's protection. The son of that instructor of his people, who was devoted to his duty, of whom Sita was the daughter-in-law, Rama, seeks the protection of Sugriva. The strong defender of the whole universe, that was formerly his highway, my Guru Rama, whom thou seest here, has come to seek refuge with Sugriva. He, under whose compassion all beings rest, Rama, has come to appeal to the goodwill of that King of the Monkeys. It is the eldest son of King Dasaratha, who was endowed with every good attribute and on this earth constantly showered honours on monarchs, Rama, renowned in the Three Worlds, who now seeks refuge in Sugriva, Lord of the Monkeys. Rama, a victim to grief, overwhelmed with affliction, has come

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as a suppliant ! It is for Sugriva with the leaders of the monkey tribes to show favour to him."

Hearing Lakshmana, uttering this appeal, his tears flowing the while, Hanuman graciously replied :—

" Such suppliants, endowed with wisdom, who have mastered their anger and other passions and whose fortune has led them to his presence, are worthy to be brought before that Indra of Monkeys. He too is exiled from his kingdom and the object of his brother's enmity, who has carried off his consort and, after maltreating him cruelly, forced him to flee trembling to the forest. That offspring of Surya, Sugriva, will form a pact of friendship with you, and I shall accompany him in his search for Sita."

Having spoken thus in a gentle and kindly tone, Hanuman said to Raghava in friendly accents :—" Let us seek out Sugriva."

At these words, the righteous Lakshmana bowed courteously to him and addressed the virtuous Raghava, saying :—

" What this monkey, born of the Wind-God, has gladly told us, his master will carry out ; it is here that thy purpose will find fulfilment, O Rama. Goodness is painted on his countenance ; he speaks cheerfully and his words ring true."

Then that extremely intelligent son of Maruta, Hanuman, went away, taking the two heroes, the descendants of Raghu, with him. Abandoning the guise of a mendicant and assuming the form of a monkey, that great ape, taking those two warriors on his shoulders, departed.

Thereafter, that intelligent son of Pavana, who was renowned among the monkeys and endowed with great prowess, delighted to have accomplished his design, scaled the mountain with immense bounds taking Rama and Lakshmana with him.

### CHAPTER 5

#### *The Alliance of Rama and Sugriva*

FROM the Rishyamuka mountain, Hanuman bounded to the Mt. Malaya and presenting the two valiant descendants of Raghu to Sugriva, said :—

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"This is Rama, O Great and Wise King, who has come here with Lakshmana, his brother ; this true hero, born in the dynasty of Ikshwaku, is the son of King Dasaratha.

"Fixed in his duty, he is carrying out the behests of his sire, that great king who, gratifying the Deity of Fire, Agni, with the Rajasuya and Ashwamedha sacrifices, at those times distributed hundreds and thousands of cows in charity.

"On account of a woman, his son, Rama, who is present here, was exiled to the forest and, while that magnanimous hero was dwelling there, practising asceticism, Ravana carried off his consort ; he now seeks thy protection.

"These two brothers, Rama and Lakshmana, solicit thy friendship ; do thou receive these heroes, worthy of homage, with honour ! "

Hearing these words of Hanuman, Sugriva, the King of the Monkeys, who had now become easy of access, said to Rama:—

"This is a great fortune and the greatest of gains for me O Lord, that thou desirest to ally thyself in friendship with me, who am one of the Monkey Tribe. Should that friendship find favour with thee, then here is my hand, take it into thine and let us bind ourselves fast with a vow."

Hearing Sugriva's sweet words, Rama with a joyful heart clasped his hand and, happy in the thought of the alliance they were about to conclude, embraced him warmly.

Then Hanuman, the Subduer of his Foes, who had put off his monk's guise, assuming his own shape, kindled a fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together. The fire being lit and flowers cast into it, thus preparing it, he placed it between them,<sup>1</sup> full of joy and devotion.

Going round it they both worshipped the fire and thus Sugriva and Rama were united in friendship. Whereupon the hearts of the monkey and Rama were merry and, gazing upon each other, they were unable to have their fill.

"Thou art now the friend of my heart in joy and pain ! We are one ! " Thus spoke Sugriva in his satisfaction, as also Rama, and breaking off a branch from a Sala tree adorned with leaves and covered with flowers, Sugriva laid it down as it were a carpet and with Rama sat down upon it, whilst the

<sup>1</sup> The fire apparently being in a brazier.



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delighted Hanuman, born of Maruta, in his turn, offered Lakshmana a branch of blossoming sandalwood.

Thereafter, full of happiness, Sugriva, his eyes wide with delight, said to Rama in sweet and gentle tones :—

“Cruelly persecuted, O Rama, I came hither in great fear, my consort having been wrested from me, and, in deep distress, I took refuge in this inaccessible part of the forest, where I now dwell, my mind distracted with terror.

“My brother oppresses me and is mine enemy, O Rama, O Great Hero ; do thou deliver me from the fear which Bali inspires in me ! Act, O Kakutstha, in such a way that my courage may be restored.”

At these words, the illustrious and virtuous Rama, a lover of justice, smiling, answered Sugriva, saying :—

“I know well that the fruit of friendship is mutual aid, O Great Monkey ! I shall slay that Bali, who has carried off thy consort ! These pointed shafts that thou perceivest, these arrows bright as the sun, fly straight to their target. Decorated with heron’s feathers and resembling Indra’s thunderbolt, skilfully wrought, their points sharpened, resembling provoked serpents, they will pierce that perverse wretch with force. To-day thou shalt see Bali fall on the earth like a cleft mountain struck by these pointed darts, resembling venomous snakes.”

Encouraged by Rama’s words, Sugriva, overjoyed, spoke again, saying :—“May I by thy grace, O Valiant Lion among Men, regain my consort and my kingdom. O King, do thou restrain my wicked elder brother from harming me hereafter.”

At the moment when Sugriva and Rama concluded their alliance, Sita’s left eye, resembling a lotus, twitched,<sup>1</sup> as also did that of the Indra of Monkeys, which resembled gold, and that of the titan, Ravana, which was like a flame.

<sup>1</sup> A foreshowing of coming events.

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## CHAPTER 6

### *Sugriva shows Rama Sita's Cloak and Jewels*

IN his joy, Sugriva addressed Raghava, the delight of the House of Raghu, once again, saying: "I have learnt thine history from my servant, the best of counsellors, Hanuman, and why thou hast come to these sylvan solitudes, where thou residest with thy brother Lakshmana.

"Borne away by a titan, thy consort, Maithili, the daughter of Janaka, is grieving far from thee and the sagacious Lakshmana. That titan seeking an opportunity to do thee mischief, having slain the vulture, Jatayu, carried off thy consort, thus rendering thee unhappy. Thou shalt soon be freed from the sorrow that the abduction of thy loved one causes thee.

"Whether she is to be found in heaven or hell, I shall seek out that lady and bring her back to thee, O Conqueror of Thine Enemies! Know well, I speak truly, O Raghava. Sita is not destined to be the food of gods or titans; thy consort will prove to be a poisoned dish to them!

"Banish thy grief, I will bring thy dear one back to thee. As I surmised, it was undoubtedly Sita that I saw when that titan of cruel deeds bore her away. She was crying: 'O Rama! O Lakshmana!' in a pitiful voice and struggling in Ravana's arms, like the female of the Serpent King.

"Seeing me with my five companions standing on the summit of the mountain, she dropped her cloak and magnificent jewels, which we collected and preserved, O Rama. I will bring them to thee and thou wilt perchance be able to call them to remembrance."

On this, Rama answered Sugriva in all affection and said:—"Go quickly and bring them to me here without delay, O Friend!"

At these words, Sugriva, intent on pleasing Rama, ran in all haste to a deep cave in the mountain, and seizing the cloak and jewels, that monkey showed them to Rama, saying:—"These are they, O Raghava!"

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Then Rama, taking the raiment and the sparkling jewels, found his eyes to be misty with tears, as the moon is veiled in cloud, tears that in his affection for Sita fell in torrents, and, losing his composure, he fell to the earth, sobbing :  
“ O My Dear One ! ”

Pressing the precious jewels to his breast, heaving deep sighs like the furious hissing of a snake in its hole, his eyes streaming with tears, perceiving Lakshmana at his side, he began to lament bitterly, saying :—

“ O Lakshmana, behold Vaidehi’s cloak and jewels, which, while being carried away, she allowed to fall on the earth ; without doubt, it was on this grassy slope that Sita, while being borne away, scattered her ornaments, their condition confirms it.”

Hearing Rama’s words, Lakshmana said :—“ I do not recognize the bracelets or earrings, but I know the anklets, for I worshipped her feet alone.”<sup>1</sup>

Then Rama said to Sugriva :—“ In what place didst thou behold Vaidehi, my chaste spouse, dearer to me than life itself ? What hideous titan bore her away ? Where does that monster dwell, who has plunged me in this mourning ? Having carried Sita away and kindled my wrath, he has forfeited his life and opened the portals of death. Say, who is this titan, who, in the forest, has by craft borne away my tender consort ? O Chief of the Monkeys, to-day I shall dispatch him to the region of death.”

### CHAPTER 7

#### *Sugriva consoles Rama*

Thus, in his distress, did Rama speak, and the monkey, Sugriva, with joined palms, weeping, his voice shaken with sobs, answered him, saying :—

“ Indeed I do not know where that wicked titan dwells, nor his strength, nor the extent of his valour, nor the tribe to which that vile monster belongs, but, O Subduer of Thy Foes, I beg thee in all sincerity to master thy grief.

<sup>1</sup> Implying that he never raised his eyes above her feet.

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“By mine efforts, I shall succeed in restoring Maithili to thee! By slaying Ravana and his entire house and manifesting my personal courage to the uttermost, I shall act in such a way that thou wilt be happy 'ere long. Thou hast yielded to despair sufficiently, now exhibit thy native resolution! Men like thee should not give way to despondency!

“I too suffer greatly on account of separation from my consort, but I do not despair like thee, nor have I lost courage. Though but a common monkey, I do not indulge in complaint. How much less shouldst thou do so, O Magnanimous Hero, thou who art wise, valiant and illustrious!

“Thou shouldst resolutely restrain the tears that fall; it becometh thee not to lose patience, that quality that distinguishes men of nobility.

“A brave man has recourse to reason and does not allow himself to be moved either in adversity, consequent on separation from relatives, or on the loss of possessions, or at the time of death. But the man who is lacking in courage and gives way to despair inevitably succumbs to his grief, like an overloaded ship in the water.

“Bowling low before thee with joined palms, I beseech thee to summon up all thy fortitude and not yield to misery. Those who permit themselves to be overcome by grief never succeed, and their strength is decreased; do not therefore give thyself up to sorrow.

“He who is overwhelmed by despair is in danger. Banish thy sorrow, O Indra among Men, and revive thy courage; let it be fully restored! I speak to thee for thine own good, as a friend; I do not wish to instruct thee. Therefore for our friendship's sake, do not yield thyself up to grief.”

Tenderly consoled by Sugriva, Rama wiped his face, which was wet with tears, with the corner of his tunic and, returning to his normal state as a result of Sugriva's words, the Lord Kakutstha, embracing him, said:—

“O Sugriva, thou dost fulfil the role of a devoted friend, that of being of service with dignity. O Friend, see how, through thy good counsel, I have become myself again. It is not easy to find such an ally, who is suffering the same adversity; therefore exert thyself to find Maithili and the cruel titan,



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that perverse Ravana, and tell me frankly what I should do. Thou art a rich field that the rains have visited ; everything will succeed with thee. Further, the words I recently pronounced<sup>1</sup> with confidence, O Tiger among Monkeys, will without doubt come to pass. Never have I uttered a falsehood, nor shall I ever do so. I swear by the truth, that what I have said will come to pass ! ”

Hearing the words of that King of Men, the wise leader of the valiant monkeys felt in his heart that his purpose was accomplished.

### CHAPTER 8

#### *Sugriva implores Rama to help him against Bali*

GRATIFIED on hearing these words, Sugriva joyfully addressed the elder brother of Lakshmana in this wise :—

“ Undoubtedly I am favoured by the Gods, since I have a virtuous friend, full of great qualities, such as thou ! With thy help, O Irreproachable One, it would be possible for me even to conquer the celestial realm, how much more regain my kingdom, O Lord ! I am the object of reverence to my friends and kinsmen, O Rama, since, witnessed by the sacred fire, I have formed an alliance with thee ! O Descendant of the House of Raghu, thou wilt soon find me worthy of thy friendship, but it does not become me to speak of mine own good qualities. It is in great heroes such as thou, masters of themselves, that affection, like true courage, remains fixed, O Best of Well-born Men ! Silver, gold and precious gems are shared amongst friends as belonging to either ; rich or poor, happy or wretched, destitute or gifted with good qualities, a friend is ever a friend. Good fortune, prosperity or country, O Irreproachable Hero, are all sacrificed for the sake of a friend ; only devotion to him matters.”

“ True indeed,” replied the blessed Rama to the handsome Sugriva, in the presence of Lakshmana, who equalled Vasava in wisdom.

<sup>1</sup> Concerning Bali.

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The following day, Sugriva, seeing Rama standing by the valiant Lakshmana, scanned the forest hurriedly and, observing a Sala tree at no great distance, covered with flowers and heavy with luxuriant foliage, in which bees were humming, tore off a magnificent leafy branch, and spreading it on the ground sat down on it with Rama.

Seeing the two thus installed, Hanuman, in his turn, breaking off a branch of a Sala tree, invited the self-effacing Lakshmana to take his place there.

Beholding Rama seated at his ease on that lofty mountain, covered with flowering Sala trees, radiating serenity like a peaceful lake, Sugriva, in his delight, in soft and gentle tones, leaning towards his friend who was manifesting extreme joy, said to him in accents trembling with emotion :—

“Harassed by my brother, my declared enemy, O Rama, fear of Bali preys on my mind. O Thou who art the refuge of the world, I am without a defender, grant me thy support !”

Hearing these words, the illustrious and virtuous Rama, fixed in his duty, smiling, answered Sugriva, saying :—

“Administering relief is the fruit of friendship, harming others that of enmity ! This very day, I shall slay the abductor of thy consort. Here are my winged shafts and fiery arrows, O Fortunate One, whose hafts, inlaid with gold, resembling Mahendra’s thunder-bolt, have come from the forest of Karttikeya and are adorned with heron’s plumes. Their smooth joints and sharp points lend them the appearance of angry snakes. Thou shalt see that enemy, thy brother called Bali, tainted with evil deeds, struck down with these arrows, like a mountain crumbling into dust.”

Hearing Rama’s words, Sugriva, the leader of the monkey army, felt an inexpressible joy. “Excellent ! Excellent !”, he cried. “O Rama, I have been overwhelmed with distress and thou art the refuge of the afflicted. Knowing thee to be mine ally, I have poured out my sorrow on thy breast. Having clasped thy hand in mine, witnessed by the fire, thou hast become the most valued friend of my life ; by the truth I swear it. I have taken thee as my friend and speak to thee in confidence. The misfortune that has overtaken me constantly gnaws at my heart.”

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Thus spoke Sugriva, his eyes brimming, his voice strangled with sobs, unable to continue. Then, stemming the stream of his tears, that flowed like a raging torrent, Sugriva, in Rama's presence, mastering himself in an instant and, stifling his sobs, wiped his beautiful eyes. Thereafter, that illustrious monkey once again addressed Raghava, saying :—

“ O Rama, formerly Bali, overwhelming me with insults, banished me from the kingdom. Seizing my consort, dearer to me than life itself, he bound my friends in chains. Then that perverse wretch sought to destroy me, O Rama, and often the monkeys themselves were bribed to that end, but I slew them. Full of apprehension on seeing thee, O Rama, I did not venture to go out to meet thee, being a prey to fear and yet in dread.

“ These monkeys with Hanuman as their leader are my sole companions ; it is due to them that I am still alive, though the situation is grave. These loyal monkeys surround and protect me, accompanying me on all my journeys, remaining with me wherever I decide to stay.

“ O Rama, of what use is it to speak further ? My elder brother, Bali, distinguished for his cruelty, is mine adversary. If he dies, at that very moment my misfortunes will be at an end. My happiness, nay, my very life, depends on his destruction. This is the only remedy for my woes. I tell thee this while yet overcome with grief ; happy or unhappy, a friend is ever the refuge of a friend ! ”

At these words, Rama enquired of Sugriva, saying :—“ I wish to know the source of this hostility, tell me the cause of your mutual enmity. When the reason for thine hatred is known to me, O Monkey, I will concern myself with thy relief. I shall reflect carefully on the matter and on its strength and weakness. Great is mine indignation to learn of thine ill-treatment, my heart beats faster, as in the rainy season the river's flow is augmented. Speak with serene confidence while I string my bow, and know that when I loose my shaft to strike thine adversary, he is already slain.”

Hearing the speech of the magnanimous Kakutstha, Sugriva and his counsellors were highly gratified, and with a cheerful countenance Sugriva began to relate the real cause of his enmity with Bali to the elder brother of Lakshmana.

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## CHAPTER 9

### *The Story of Bali and Mayavi*

“BALI is the name of my elder brother, the Scourge of his Foes. He was ever held in great esteem by my father and mother, and I, also, loved him. When his father died, he being the elder, the ministers, who thought highly of him, installed him as King of the Monkeys. During his rule over that immense empire of his ancestors, I lived in constant subjection to him, as one of his servants. On account of a woman, a great quarrel arose between Mayavi, the illustrious elder son of Dundubhi and Bali. One night, whilst others slept, Mayavi approached the gates of Kishkindha, roaring with anger and challenged Bali to fight. Roused from deep sleep by those formidable cries, my brother, unable to contain himself, went forth immediately, advancing in fury on that powerful titan in order to kill him. His wives and I tried to restrain him and I threw myself at his feet, but he repelled us all and went forth full of valour.

“Then, out of devotion, I followed him. Seeing my brother and me following within a short distance, the titan, in fear, fled in all haste. Struck with terror he ran on, but we ran even faster. The moon, that had risen, flooded the path with its light. Hidden by grass, a large hole in the ground came into view and the titan threw himself into it precipitately. We reached the edge and halted. Bali, who was overcome with rage, his senses perturbed, said to me :—

““ O Sugriva, remain here, without leaving the mouth of the cave, while I enter in order to engage the enemy and slay him! ’

“Hearing these words I besought that Destroyer of his Foes to go no further but he, under the threat of a curse, told me not to move from there and disappeared into the cavern.

“After his entry into the cave, a whole year elapsed and I remained at my post without ; I imagined him to be dead and



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in my affection for him was deeply distressed and a prey to fearful presentiments, reflecting : ' I shall not see my brother again.'

"Then, for a long time, blood mixed with foam flowed from the cave and the roaring of the titan reached my ears, but I did not hear the cries of triumph that my elder brother emitted in the struggle. Thereafter on account of the various signs, I went away, thinking that my brother was dead, but first I blocked up the mouth of the cave with a rock as large as a mountain. O My Friend, overcome by sorrow, I offered up the ceremonial water for my brother and returned to Kishkindha.

"Despite mine efforts to keep the matter secret, the ministers learnt of it and having taken counsel together, they installed me as sovereign. I ruled the empire with justice, O Rama. In the meantime Bali, having slain his enemy, the titan, returned. Seeing me installed with all the insignia of royalty, his eyes became red with anger and he overwhelmed me with reproaches and bound my ministers in chains.

"Having slain his adversary, my brother returned to the city, and I, paying obeisance to that great warrior, offered him the traditional homage, but he did not respond to my cordial congratulations. I touched his feet with my forehead, O Lord, but Bali in his anger refused to pardon me."

## CHAPTER 10

### *The Origin of Bali's Hatred of Sugriva*

"IN my desire to make peace, I tried to placate my brother, who, returning, was incensed against me.

"I said : ' By the grace of the Gods, thou art victorious and thine enemy has fallen under thy blows ; without thee, I should be bereft of support, thou art my only defender, O My Protector, My Delight ! Now accept this royal canopy of many supports, resembling the full moon about to rise. Take also these chanwaras from my hands !

" ' O King ! For a whole year I waited sadly beside the cave and, seeing blood flowing to the entrance and stopping

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there, my heart was filled with anguish and my mind deeply troubled. I then closed the opening of the cavern with a great rock and left that place to return to Kishkindha in deep distress. Seeing me, the people of that city and the ministers also placed me on the throne, without my desiring it. Therefore pardon me, thou who art our Sovereign. I was invested with royal dignity in thine absence and thus preserved the city, its ministers and inhabitants, from anarchy. This kingdom has been as a trust to me ; I now render it back to thee, O Friend. Do not be wrath against me, O Destroyer of thy Foes ! Placing my head at thy feet, O King, with joined palms, I appeal to thee. It was on the insistence of the ministers and the united populace, that I was placed on the throne, they reflecting that the country would be seized by an enemy in the absence of a monarch.'

"To this humble speech, Bali answered with invectives, saying :—'Cursed be thou !' and repeated the imprecation. Then, gathering his subjects and ministers together, he inveighed against me, in the midst of my friends, reproaching me with bitter words, saying :—

" 'Know well, that in anger the great Titan, Mayavi, one night challenged me to a long-desired combat. Hearing his voice, I left my royal dwelling and was followed immediately by my unscrupulous brother, who is present here. In the night, seeing me followed by another, that great titan fled terrified and both of us pursued him closely. In his haste to escape, he entered a great cave, and, seeing that vast and fearful cavern, I said to my false-hearted brother : 'I cannot return to the city till I have slain my rival ; do thou wait at the mouth of the pit till I have struck him down.' In the belief that he would remain there, I penetrated into that inaccessible cave.

" 'While I was pursuing mine enemy, whose audacity rendered him truly formidable, a whole year elapsed, but at last I discovered him and slew him with his entire family. That titan, while being slain, roared aloud, and a stream of blood that spread all round, filled the cave, making it difficult to pass. Having happily slain my cruel adversary, I could not find the opening of the cave, the entrance having been

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closed. I called Sugriva again and again but there was no response and my situation was serious. By dint of kicking, I was able to roll back the rock and emerged, after which I returned to the city. That is why I am incensed against the wicked Sugriva, whose desire for the throne overcame his brotherly affection.'

"With these words, the monkey Bali, bereft of all sense of shame, chased me from the kingdom with but a single garment, having ill-treated me and carried off my consort, O Rama. Wretched and deprived of my companions, I took refuge on this lofty mountain, Rishyamuka, to which, for a particular reason, Bali has no access. This is the whole story of the origin of our intense hostility ; I have not merited the great humiliation that has visited me, as thou now seest, O Raghava. O Thou who art the dispeller of fear, do thou take this dread of my brother from me and punish him in my name."

The virtuous prince, having heard the faithful Sugriva's narrative, smiling, answered him saying :—

"These arrows of mine, bright as the sun, never fail to reach their target and with their sharp points will strike down that evil Bali with force. As long as I do not behold this ravisher of thy consort, this wretch of perverse practices will live, but not an instant longer.

"I see thee to be plunged in an ocean of grief, as am I, and I shall aid thee to traverse it ; thou shalt certainly regain thine erstwhile prosperity."

Hearing these words, that increased his joy and courage, Sugriva, in extreme delight, uttered the following memorable words.

### CHAPTER II

#### *Sugriva tells Rama of Bali's Exploits*

HAVING listened to Rama's words, which inspired him with joy and courage, Sugriva paid obeisance to him, manifesting his gratitude, and said :—"In thy wrath, undoubtedly, thou art

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able to burn up the worlds with thy sharp arrows, like the fire at the end of the great cycle ; yet reflect on the courage of Bali and, having heard me with attention, consider what should be done.

“ ’Ere the sun rises, the indefatigable Bali strides from the western to the eastern ocean and from the northern to the southern sea. He is so powerful that he is able to break off the lofty mountain peaks, throwing them into the air and catching them again. In order to demonstrate his strength, he will snap in two innumerable trees of every kind in the forest.

“ Once, there existed a giant, named Dundubhi, in the form of a buffalo, who resembled the peak of Mt. Kailasha and who was as strong as a thousand elephants. The thought of his own might intoxicated him and he was puffed up with pride on account of the boons he had received.

“ That giant came to the sea, the Lord of Rivers, and approached that ocean of tumultuous waves, rich in pearls, saying :—‘ Let us enter into combat one with the other ! ’ But that righteous Lord of the Waters, rising up in all his majesty, answered that titan who was driven on by destiny, saying :—‘ O Skilful Warrior, I am not able to take up thy challenge, but hear and I will tell thee of one who can match thee in fight.

“ ‘ On a vast plain, the retreat of the ascetics, there lives a monarch of the mountains, named Himavat, the far-famed father-in-law of Shiva. He possesses great rivers, many ravines and waterfalls and is well able to satisfy thine overwhelming lust for combat.’ Reflecting : ‘ The ocean holds me in dread’, that foremost of titans sped to the forest of Himavat, as swift as an arrow loosed from a bow.

“ Breaking off the great white cliffs, Dundubhi let them roll down, shouting with exultation. Then, like a mass of white cloud, Himavat of gentle and benign aspect, standing on the summit of the mountain, addressed that titan thus :—‘ Do not torment me, O Dundubhi, O Thou who delightest in justice ! I am not concerned with the exploits of warriors but am a refuge of the ascetics.’

“ Hearing these words of that righteous monarch of the mountains, Dundubhi, his eyes red with anger, answered :—

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“ ‘ If thou hast not the strength to fight and art paralysed with fear, then tell me who is able to match his prowess with mine, for I wish to enter into combat with him.’ ”

“ Hearing this, the wise Himavat, skilful in discourse, answered that powerful titan to whom he had spoken previously, saying :—

“ ‘ The name of that hero of great intelligence, who dwells in Kishkindha, is Bali, the illustrious son of Shakra. That great sage is a skilful warrior and of thy stature, he is as well able to enter into combat with thee as Vasava with Namuchi. Go with all speed and seek him out, since thou art thirsting to fight ; he has little patience and is ever full of martial ardour.’ ”

“ Having listened to the words of Himavat, Dundubhi in fury went to Kishkindha, Bali’s city, and assuming the form of a terrible buffalo with pointed horns, resembling a thunder-cloud charged with rain in the sky, that powerful titan came to the gates of the capital. Causing the earth to tremble with his cries, he uprooted the trees near the entrance of the city, snapping them in two. Then, like an elephant, he burst open the gates.

“ My brother, who was in the inner apartments, hearing the tumult, came out, full of impatience, surrounded by his wives, like the moon encircled with stars, and that leader of the monkeys, Bali, said to Dundubhi in clear and measured accents :—

“ ‘ O Dundubhi, why dost thou obstruct the gateway of the city and bellow thus ? I know who thou art. Have a care for thy life, O Warrior ! ’ ”

“ At these words of the sagacious King of the Monkeys, Dundubhi, his eyes red with anger, answered :—

“ ‘ Do not address me thus in the presence of women, O Warrior ! Accept my challenge and meet me in combat to-day, so that I can measure thy strength, though, O Monkey, I am willing to restrain my wrath for one night, to allow thee to indulge in the pleasures of love, according to thy whim, till the rising of the sun. Distribute alms, therefore, to thy monkeys and embrace them for the last time. Thou art the King of the Deer of the Trees, do thou load thy friends and



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people with favours. Look long on Kishkindha ; enjoy the company of thy wives, for I am about to chastise thee for thine insolence. To slay a drunken man or one who is demented or whose strength has ebbed away or who is without weapons or defence, or one, like thee, given over to lust, is considered equal to infanticide in the world.'

" Dismissing all his wives, including Tara and others, my brother, restraining his wrath, smiling, answered that chief of the titans, saying :—

" ' Do not make a pretext of my being inebriated if thou art not afraid to enter into combat with me ! Know that in the present issue this intoxication is the wine of warriors ! '

" With these words he threw off the golden chain that his sire, Mahendra, had given him and began to fight. Seizing Dundubhi by the horns, who resembled a mountain, that elephant among monkeys roared aloud and began to assail him with blows. Thereafter Bali with a tremendous shout threw him on the ground and blood began to flow from the stricken buffalo.

" Then betwixt the two combatants, Bali and Dundubhi, mad with anger, each desirous of overcoming the other, a terrible struggle ensued. My brother fought with matchless courage, equal to Indra's, dealing blows with his fists, knees, feet and also with rocks and trees. The duel between the monkey and the titan caused the latter to weaken, whilst the strength of the former grew. In the end, Bali, lifting Dundubhi up, let him fall on the earth and in this death struggle the giant perished.

" As he fell blood flowed in rivers from the veins of his body and that titan of vast limbs lay stretched on the ground, having rejoined the elements.

" Lifting up the inanimate corpse in his two arms, Bali with one throw sent it flying to a distance of four miles. From the titan's jaws, shattered by the violence of the fall, blood spouted forth and the drops were carried by the wind to Matanga's hermitage. Seeing that rain of blood, the Sage, displeased, reflected : ' What perverse wretch has dared to spatter me with blood ? Who is this evil, perfidious and vile creature, this madman ? '

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“Thinking thus, that excellent Muni went out of the hermitage and beheld the buffalo, as large as a mountain, lying dead on the ground. By virtue of his austerities, he knew that a monkey was responsible for this deed and he pronounced a terrible curse on that ape who had thrown the corpse there saying:—

“ ‘ May he never come here ! If that monkey who, with a stream of blood, has desecrated this wood where I have built my retreat, ever sets foot in this place, he will die ! Should that wicked wretch who has thrown the corpse of this titan here, breaking my trees, come within four miles of my hermitage, he shall assuredly not survive and his confederates, whosoever they may be, who have sought refuge in my forest, will not be permitted to remain here following this malediction. Let them go where they will, for I shall assuredly curse any who stay in these woods, that I have protected like mine own offspring, and destroy the foliage and young shoots, plucking the fruit and scratching up the roots. From to-day, every monkey that I see here will be changed into stone for the period of a thousand years ! ’

“ On hearing the words of the ascetic, all the monkeys that frequented those woods went away, and, beholding them issuing from the forest, Bali enquired of them, saying :—

“ ‘ Why have ye all come here, ye dwellers in the Matanga Forest ? Happy are they who dwell in the woods ! ’

“ Then those monkeys told Bali, who wore a chain of gold, the cause of their departure and also of the curse that had been laid on them.

“ My brother, hearing the monkeys’ words, sought out that great Rishi and with joined palms attempted to appease him, but Matanga refused to listen to him and re-entered his hermitage.

“ Trembling under the shadow of that curse, Bali began to roam about aimlessly, but, terrified of the malediction, that monkey did not dare approach the great mountain Rishyamuka or even glance in that direction, O Prince.

“ Knowing he will never venture here, O Rama, I wander about these woods with my companions, free of all anxiety. The heaped bones of Dundubhi, the victim of the arrogance, his strength inspired in him, are here and resemble the peak

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of a vast mountain. Bali in his might, stripped all the leaves from these seven giant Sala trees with their mighty boughs, one after the other. His strength is immeasurable, O Rama ; I have now proved it to thee. In consequence, I do not see how thou canst overcome him in battle, O King."

Thus spoke Sugriva and Lakshmana, smiling, then enquired of him :—

"What can Rama do to convince thee that he is able to overcome him ?" Sugriva then made answer :—

"If Rama is able to penetrate these seven Sala trees, that Bali pierced again and again, with a single arrow, then, by that sign, I shall know he can overcome him. At the same time, let him with a single kick send the carcase of the buffalo flying to a distance of a hundred bows' length."

Having spoken, Sugriva, the corners of whose eyes were slightly red, reflected awhile and then once more addressed Rama, the descendant of Kakutstha, saying :—

"Full of courage and audacity, renowned for his strength and energy, that powerful monkey has never been defeated in combat. His exploits are famous ; the Gods themselves are not able to accomplish them. It was on remembering them, filled with terror, that I resolved to take refuge on the Rishyamuka Mountain. Thinking of that Indra among Monkeys and how invincible, irresistible and ruthless he is, I came here. Filled with distress and anguish, I wander about in these woods with my devoted and excellent companions, Hanuman and others. Thou art for me a glorious and illustrious friend, O Thou who art dear to thy friends, O Lion among Men ! I take refuge with thee as in another Himavat ; yet I am conversant with the strength of my wicked brother and his overbearing nature and I am not acquainted with thy skill as a warrior, O Raghava. Assuredly, it is not that I wish to test thee or humiliate thee nor inspire thee with fear by recounting his great exploits. Mine own cowardice is well known ! O Rama, thine accents, thine assurance, thy temerity and thy stature truly manifest thy great power, which is like a fire concealed beneath the ashes."

Hearing the words of the magnanimous Sugriva, Rama began to smile and answered him, saying :—

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"If thou dost not trust in our courage, O Monkey, I will instil thee with that confidence so essential in war."

Then with his foot, that mighty hero sent the dried up carcase of that titan flying. Seeing the carcase hurtling through the air, Sugriva once more addressed Rama, who was as radiant as the sun, in the presence of Lakshmana and the monkeys and in candid accents said :—

"O my Friend, when that corpse was fresh and its flesh intact, it was sent flying through the air by my brother, though he was weakened by inebriation and fatigue. Now stripped of flesh, as light as a straw, thou hast kicked it in play; it is therefore impossible for me to judge who is the more powerful, thou or Bali. Between a fresh corpse and dry bones, there is a great difference, O Raghava.

"I am therefore still uncertain, My Dear Friend, as to who is the stronger, thou or Bali, but if thou art able to pierce even a single Sala tree, then I should be able to judge who is superior and who inferior. Therefore stretch that bow, which resembles the trunk of an elephant and drawing the cord up to thine ear, discharge that great arrow, which I am sure will penetrate the Sala tree and by that sign I shall be satisfied. I implore thee, O Prince, to do me this great favour. As amongst the planets the sun is greatest and among mountains the Himalayas, just as among quadrupeds the lion is king, so among men thou art supreme in valour."

### CHAPTER 12

#### *The Fight between Sugriva and Bali*

HEARING Sugriva's gracious speech, Rama, in order to inspire him with confidence, took up his bow and a formidable arrow, and taking aim, pierced the Sala trees, filling the firmament with the sound.

Loosed by that mighty warrior, the arrow, decorated with gold, passed through the seven Sala trees and entering the mountain, buried itself in the earth. In the twinkling of an

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eye that shaft with the speed of lightning, having pierced the seven trees with extreme velocity, returned to Rama's quiver.

Seeing those seven trees pierced by Rama's impetuous arrow, that Bull among Monkeys was extremely astonished and, overcome with joy adorned with all his ornaments, prostrated himself before Raghava with joined palms, his forehead touching the earth,

Amazed at Rama's prowess, he addressed that great warrior, skilled in the scriptural traditions, as also in the use of every weapon, who stood before him and said :—

“O Lion among Men, with thine arrows, thou art able to destroy all the Gods with their King in combat, why not Bali also? O Kakutstha, who can resist thee on the field of battle, thou, who hast pierced seven Sala trees, the mountain and the earth with a single arrow! Now my anxieties are dispelled and my satisfaction complete. Where could I find a friend such as thou, who art equal to Mahendra and Varuna? For my sake do thou subdue mine adversary in the form of a brother, I implore thee!”

Rama, embracing the handsome Sugriva, like unto Lakshmana, in his great wisdom answered him, saying :—

“Let us leave here without delay for Kishkindha. Do thou precede us. When we come to that city, O Sugriva, it is for thee to challenge Bali, who is a brother in name only.”

Thereafter they started out in all haste for Kishkindha, Bali's capital. Concealing themselves behind some trees, they halted in a dense wood where Sugriva hurled defiance at Bali with a deep and challenging roar. His clothes tightly wrapped round him, he shouted with all his strength, shattering the silence of the firmament.

When the powerful Bali heard his brother emitting this tremendous clamour, he was livid with anger and rushed out like the sun rising over the mountain top. Then a terrible struggle ensued between Bali and Sugriva, resembling the clash of Mars and Jupiter, in the heavens.

With the striking of their palms like the clap of thunder and their fists that were as hard as diamonds, the two brothers, filled with fury, assaulted each other, whilst Rama, bow in hand, watched those two combatants, who resembled the Ashwins.

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Not being able to distinguish between Bali and Sugriva, Rama was loath to loose his death-dealing shaft. Then Sugriva, overcome by Bali, seeing that Rama refrained from coming to his aid, ran towards the Rishyamuka Mountain. Exhausted, his limbs covered with blood, crushed by his brother's blows, who pressed him furiously, he took refuge in the vast forest. The mighty Bali, seeing him penetrating deep into the woods, said :—

“Go ! I spare thee !” he himself not venturing to enter there, through fear of the curse.

Then Rama, accompanied by his brother and Hanuman, re-entering the wood, found the monkey Sugriva. When the latter perceived Rama returning with Lakshmana, he hung his head in shame and in a tearful voice, his eyes fixed on the ground, said :—

“After demonstrating thy strength, thou didst issue the command : ‘Challenge thine adversary !’ Thereafter thou didst allow him to defeat me. Why hast thou done this ? O Raghava, thou shouldst have told me frankly : ‘I do not wish to slay Bali,’ then I would not have left this place.” Thus in sad and reproachful tones did the great-souled Sugriva speak, and Rama answered him, saying :—

“O Sugriva, My Dear Friend, do not vex thyself but hear the reason why I did not discharge mine arrow. Thine ornaments, clothes, shape and gestures and those of Bali so resembled each other that there was no difference between you ! The voice, colour, look, prowess and speech were wholly similar, O Monkey ! Disconcerted by thine exact resemblance, O Best of Monkeys, I did not let fly my swift and dreadful death-dealing arrow, the slayer of the foe, for this reason. ‘One must have a care not to destroy them both,’ I reflected. In truth, had I made an end of thine existence, O Chief of the Monkeys, through ignorance or carelessness, then my stupidity and heedlessness would have been apparent. To kill one’s ally is assuredly a great and heinous sin. Further, I, Lakshmana and the fair-complexioned Sita are all wholly dependent on thee ; in the forest, thou art our refuge. Enter once more into combat, therefore, and fear nothing, O Monkey. In the twinkling of an eye, thou shalt see me piercing Bali with my

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shaft and striking him down; thou shalt see him writhing on the field of battle. Do thou, however, wear a distinguishing sign, O Chief of the Monkeys, by the help of which I may recognize thee in the thick of the struggle. O Lakshmana, these blossoming and beautiful Gajapushpi flowers, do thou place round the neck of the magnanimous Sugriva."

Plucking the blossoming Gajapushpi from where it grew, Lakshmana placed it round the neck of Sugriva. The creeper that the fortunate Sugriva wore round his neck was as bright as the sun and resembled a circle of cranes illumining a cloud over which they are planing. Sparkling with beauty and encouraged by Rama's words, Sugriva started on the road to Kishkindha with him.

### CHAPTER 13

#### *The Hermitage of Saptajanas*

THE virtuous elder brother of Lakshmana, together with Sugriva, left the Rishyamuka Mountain and proceeded towards Kishkindha, which was maintained by Bali's valour, Rama bearing his golden bow and carrying his arrows that shone like the sun in his hand.

Sugriva, his neck adorned with a wreath of flowers, full of courage, strode before the magnanimous Raghava and Lakshmana, behind whom came the hero Hanuman with Nala, the valiant Nila and the illustrious general Tara, renowned among the monkeys.

They observed the trees bowed with the weight of their flowers and the rivers bearing their peaceful waters to the sea. The ravines and cliffs with their chasms, caves, peaks and charming dales, the lakes with their limpid waters of emerald hue, adorned with opening lotus buds, drew their gaze as they passed. Ducks, cranes, swans, woodcock and other waterfowl were heard calling, whilst in the clearings of the woods deer could be seen grazing on the tender grass and young shoots, without fear of the wild beasts that roamed everywhere.

Wild and ferocious elephants adorned with ivory tusks, who proved a menace to the lakes by causing the banks to

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crumble, wandered about here and there and intoxicated with Mada juice, striking their foreheads against the rocks, resembled moving mountains. Monkeys as large as elephants, covered with dust and every species of wild beast and bird were seen by the followers of Sugriva as they passed on their way.

Advancing thus in all haste, the Joy of the House of Raghu, Rama, seeing a grove of trees, enquired of Sugriva :—"What is this clump of trees like a cloud in the sky? Indeed they seem like a mass of clouds ringed round by plantain groves! Great is my curiosity concerning them, O My Friend. I wish to learn of thee what these are."

On this enquiry from Rama, Sugriva, still walking on, told him the history of that great wood. "O Rama! It is a vast hermitage that removes all weariness and encloses many pleasant gardens and groves; the roots, fruit and water are delicious. Under the name of Saptajanas, seven Munis of rigid vows lived there, lying in the water, their heads alone emerging from it. Every seven days they partook of food, which was the wind from the mountain on which they dwelt. After seven hundred years they ascended to heaven in their bodies. Through the power of their asceticism, this hermitage, encircled by a hedge of trees, is inaccessible even to the Gods and Asuras, as well as their leaders. The birds eschew it, as also the other beasts of the forest; those who enter it unwittingly never return. Lovely melodies are heard issuing therefrom with the music of instruments and singing. Sometimes a divine fragrance is spread abroad from there, O Raghava, and three fires are lit; it is their smoke that one can see from here; the tops of the trees are enveloped in it like a golden cloud, resembling the plumage of a dove.

"These trees are magnificent with their tops crowned with smoke, like unto mountains of emerald crowned with rain clouds. Pay obeisance with reverence to them with joined palms, O Valiant Raghava, as also thy brother, Lakshmana. Those who offer salutations to those Rishis of pure soul experience naught that is grievous."

Then Raghava with his brother Lakshmana, with joined palms, offered salutations to those illustrious ascetics. Having



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paid reverence to them, the virtuous Rama, his brother Lakshmana and Sugriva with his monkeys went on happily.

Having left the hermitage of Saptajanas far behind, they beheld the inaccessible Kishkindha protected by Bali. Rama, his younger brother Lakshmana and the monkeys, famed for their valour, seizing their weapons, once more prepared to slay their enemy in that city which the son of the Chief of the Gods protected by his prowess.

### CHAPTER 14

#### *Sugriva again challenges his brother to fight*

RETURNING to Kishkindha, Bali's city, they all concealed themselves behind the trees in the dense forest. Glancing round on every side, the Friend of the Woods, the thick-necked Sugriva began to exhibit signs of extreme anger and, surrounded by his kinsmen, let out a loud roar, challenging his brother to fight. Shattering the firmament with his war-cry which resembled a great thundercloud propelled by a high wind, that monkey, who was endowed with a leonine gait and resembled the rising sun, stepped forth.

Looking at Rama who was skilled in combat, Sugriva said to him :—" Behold Kishkindha, surrounded by its walls made of gold and a rampart of monkeys, that is bristling with instruments of war and from which innumerable banners stream. This is Bali's citadel. Now fulfil the promise formerly made to me of slaying him, O Hero, as the blessing of Spring visits the creepers."

At Sugriva's words, the virtuous Rama, the destroyer of his foes, answered :—" Thou art wearing that which will enable me to distinguish thee, this garland of Gaja flowers, placed by Lakshmana round thy neck ! This creeper worn by thee lends thee the brilliance of the sky in which the sun is surrounded by stars, O Warrior. To-day, O Monkey, I will deliver thee from the fear and hostility that Bali inspires in thee. Point out thine adversary in the guise of a brother,

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O Sugriva ! Till Bali is struck down in the forest, let him make merry, for when he crosses my path, he will not return alive. If he should do so, thou wilt be justified in reproaching me for not honouring my word.

"In thy presence, seven Sala trees were transfixed by me with a single arrow ; rest assured that Bali will fall to-day on the field of battle under my shafts.

"No light word has ever passed my lips, even in adversity, nor ever shall, even were it to attain my purpose ; therefore banish all anxiety.

"Like a field rendered fertile by the rains of Shatakratu, do thou challenge Bali of the golden diadem. O Sugriva, raise a shout that will cause that monkey, proud of his victory, whom thou wert unable to subdue before, and who is bellicose by nature, to come forth. Those who deem themselves brave are not able to endure the war-cry of their foes, above all in the presence of women."

Hearing Rama's words, the golden-hued Sugriva let out a deafening roar, rending the skies.

Terrified by the clamour, the kine ran hither and thither, like noble women exposed to danger of hostile attack through the negligence of their loved ones, and the wild deer fled away like maddened war horses wounded in battle, whilst the birds fell to the ground like planets whose virtue is exhausted.

Then that son of Surya emitted a roar resembling thunder, confident of his strength and radiant with courage, like the ocean whose waves are lashed by a tempest.

## CHAPTER 15

### *Tara's Advice to Bali*

His brother Bali, who was seated amidst his wives in the inner apartments, heard the cry of the great-hearted Sugriva and was filled with wrath. When he caught the sound of that uproar, causing terror to all beings, his feelings of lust changed

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to those of violent anger and, his limbs trembling with fury, he who formerly shone like gold suddenly lost his brilliance, like the sun under eclipse. Grinding his teeth, his eyes flashing with fire, he resembled a lake from which the lotuses have been uprooted. Hearing that unendurable cry, that monkey strode forth in great haste, stamping on the earth as if he wished to shatter it.

Then Tara, embracing him tenderly, once more avowed her devotion to him and, timid and troubled, addressed him in these words, the wisdom of which the future was to prove :—

“ O Brave Warrior, this anger that has taken hold of thee is like a raging torrent ; do thou abandon it, as on rising in the morning thou dost throw aside a faded garland. To-morrow at dawn, enter into combat with Sugriva, O Valiant Forest Dweller, for thou dost not yet know the strength or weakness of thine enemy. That thou shouldst set out immediately does not meet with my approval. Hear while I tell thee the reason why I seek to delay thee !

“ Formerly Sugriva, in great anger, came hither and challenged thee to fight, but defeated and overwhelmed by thy blows, he fled. Having been assaulted and crushed in this wise, he now returns to challenge thee again, which rouses my suspicion. To roar thus in so insolent and arrogant a manner, so filled with wrath, is not done without a particular motive. To my mind, Sugriva has not returned alone but has an escort who is ready to rush to his defence ; hence this cry of defiance. Sugriva is a naturally clever and sagacious monkey and will never ally himself to one whose valour has not been tried. This, O Warrior, is what I have heard from the youthful Prince Angada ; take heed therefore and have a care ; it is to thine advantage ! He hath told me all that he has heard from his emissaries concerning Sugriva while journeying in the forest. Two sons were born to the King of Ayodhya, full of courage, invincible in combat ; they are of the House of Ikshwaku and are renowned ; their names are Rama and Lakshmana.

“ These two indomitable heroes have sealed a pact of friendship with Sugriva, and this ally of thy brother is Rama, famed for his military exploits, the Destroyer of Enemy Hosts, who

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resembles the fire at the end of the world cycle. He dwells in the forest and is the supreme refuge of all the virtuous who seek his protection. He is the support of the oppressed, the unique repository of all glory and is conversant with both secular and spiritual learning ; his pleasure consists in carrying out the behests of his Sire.

“As the King of the Mountains is a treasury of precious metals, so is he a mine of every good quality. It is peace and not war that thou shouldst seek with that magnanimous One, the invincible Rama, whose prowess on the battlefield is without limit. O Hero, I have no desire to oppose thee, but tell thee this for thy good. Therefore, heed my counsel ! Do not seek a quarrel with thy younger brother, O Valiant Monarch. I am certain it is to thine advantage to contract a friendship with Rama. Reconcile thyself with Sugriva and put all thoughts of hatred far from thee. Thy younger brother is an inhabitant of the forest of amiable qualities. Whether he dwell here or there, he is bound to thee from every point of view, and I do not see any like him in the world. With gifts, honours and in other ways, bind him to thyself through kindness. Abandon thine ill-will and let him in future dwell near thee. The thick-necked Sugriva is a powerful, valuable and natural ally. Win back thy brother's affection ; there is no other way to happiness for thee here. If thou dost desire to please me and recognizest my devotion to thee, then in the name of affection, O My Friend, I implore thee to act as I have counselled. Follow my advice which is salutary ; trust me and do not give way to anger ; live in peace with the son of the King of Kosala ; do not quarrel with him, his valour is equal to Indra's.”

In these words, which were full of wisdom and would have enabled him to save himself, Tara addressed Bali, but he refused to listen and, driven by the force of destiny, advanced to meet his death.

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## CHAPTER 16

### *Rama inflicts a mortal Wound on Bali*

THUS spoke Tara, whose face was as radiant as the moon, and Bali answered her in tones of reproach, saying:—

“When my brother, who is above all mine adversary, challenges me in anger, how shall I endure it, O Lady of Lovely Countenance? The brave who are not accustomed to bearing insults and who never turn back in battle, O Timid One, would rather suffer death than such ignominy. I may not disregard the weak-necked Sugriva who, in his determination to enter into combat, has offered me so insolent a challenge.

“Have no anxiety on my behalf regarding Raghava, for he is conversant with dharma and pious by nature. How could he do wrong? Return home with thy companions! Why follow me further? Thou hast demonstrated thy tender devotion sufficiently! I am about to set out to fight Sugriva; control thine emotions. I shall punish his insolence, but I shall not take his life. I shall enter into combat with him, since he desires it, and, assailed by the blows dealt with my fists and the trunks of trees, he will flee. That coward will not be able to withstand my strength and prowess. O Tara, thou hast accompanied me far enough and shown thine affection for me sufficiently, now return, and I, having obtained satisfaction from my brother on the battlefield, will follow thee; I swear it by my life and race.”

Then the virtuous Tara, embracing Bali and speaking tenderly to him, weeping, circumambulated him, keeping him on her right hand, and bidding him farewell according to the tradition and reciting the sacred texts so that he might return victorious, she re-entered the inner apartments, distracted with grief.

When Tara reached the inner sanctuary with the other women, Bali, distraught with anger, went out of the city,

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hissing like a great serpent. Full of ire, breathing heavily, he ran with all his strength, looking round on every side, eager to find his adversary.

At last he beheld that powerful monkey, the golden-hued Sugriva, clothed in excellent armour, full of confidence, resembling a brazier, and, seeing him inflated with pride, Bali wrapped his garments more tightly about him, a prey to extreme anger. Having thus girded up his apparel, his fists clenched, full of vigour, he advanced to meet Sugriva and engage him in combat. From his side, Sugriva, also doubling his fists in rage, went out to meet his brother who was wearing a crown of gold.

Then Bali, addressing Sugriva, whose eyes were red with anger, who was skilled in the art of fighting and was rushing towards him in fury, said :—

“ With this clenched fist, its fingers tightly closed, I shall deal thee a blow that will cause thee to yield up thy life.”

At these words, Sugriva, livid with anger, answered :—“ It is mine that will drive the life’s breath out of thee by caving in thy skull.” Thereafter, violently assaulted by Bali, he hurled himself on him in fury, rivers of blood streaming from him, like a mountain from which torrents fall. Unperturbed, Sugriva, tearing up a Sala tree, struck his rival’s body as lightning fells a mountain peak. Struck by the Sala tree which unnerved him, Bali resembled a heavily-laden ship, sinking with all its cargo in the waves. Endowed with terrific strength and as agile as Suparna, both fought like two formidable giants resembling the sun and moon in the sky. Each of these two destroyers of their foes sought to find the weak point of his enemy.

Bali excelled in strength and valour while the son of Surya, Sugriva, despite his great energy, was the weaker, and his courage beginning to dwindle, he ceased to boast and, enraged with his brother, made a sign to Rama.

The uprooted trees with their branches and crests, the blows from fists, knees and feet, fell thick and fast in the formidable struggle that resembled the duel between Vritra and Vasava. Covered with blood, the two monkeys, dwellers in the forest, whilst fighting resembled two thunderclouds clashing together with a great uproar.

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Rama, observing Sugriva, the Prince of Monkeys, exhausted scanning the horizon without ceasing to struggle, and, seeing that he was almost overcome, selected an arrow for the purpose of slaying Bali, and that great hero stretched his bow and with that shaft, resembling a venomous serpent, held it ready, like Antaka, bearing the Wheel of Time. The twanging of the bowstring caused alarm among the birds, who flew away, as also the wild beasts who fled in terror as at the end of the world period.

Discharged by Rama with a sound like the crash of thunder, that formidable arrow of dazzling aspect pierced Bali's breast, and under its fatal impact the powerful and valiant King of the Monkeys fell to the earth, resembling Indra's banner ruthlessly thrown to the ground on the day of the full moon in the month of the constellation of Aries.

Stricken and senseless, Bali fell, his voice strangled with sobs which gradually died away. Rama, the strongest of men, discharged that formidable, fiery and death-dealing arrow, shining like gold, resembling Time itself at the end of the world, which shot forth like smoke issuing from the flaming mouth of Hara, and, streaming with blood looked like unto a blossoming Ashoka tree on the mountain-side, whereupon the Son of Vasava, like the banner of Indra that has been overthrown, fell senseless on the field of battle.

### CHAPTER 17

#### *Bali reproaches Rama*

STRUCK by Rama's arrow, that doughty warrior fell to the earth, like a tree severed by an axe. With his ornaments of fine gold, his limbs paralysed, he sank to the ground, like the banner of the Chief of the Gods, its cord severed.

At the fall of the King of the Monkeys, the earth grew dark, resembling the firmament bereft of the moon. Though lying on the earth, the body of that high-souled Bali was neither robbed of its beauty nor of its life's breath, nor did his courage

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fail him, for that excellent golden necklace that Indra had bestowed on him preserved the life, strength and beauty of that Lord of Monkeys. Adorned with that golden chain, the heroic Monkey Chief appeared like an evening cloud tinged with the roseate hues of dusk ! His chain, his body and the arrow piercing his heart blazed in triple glory, even after he had fallen. That arrow loosed by the valiant Rama from his bow, by its virtue opening the way to heaven, brought Bali supreme deliverance.

Lying on the field of battle, like a fire without flame, he resembled Yayati cast forth from the divine realms, fallen on the earth, his merits exhausted. Like the sun that Time, at the end of the world, throws down on the earth ; unapproachable like Mahendra, inaccessible as Upendra, with his golden necklace, his broad chest, his vast arms, his mouth inflamed, his glances wild, that son of a mighty king lay. And Rama followed by Lakshmana, their eyes fixed upon him, approached that warrior lying there like a naked flame about to be quenched. Full of respect for that hero, who was gazing at them, the two valiant brothers, Rama and Lakshmana, approached with slow steps.

On perceiving them, the supremely courageous Bali uttered these harsh words, that seemed both restrained and just. Stretched on the earth, almost without lustre, mortally wounded, motionless, in words pregnant with meaning he addressed that warrior proudly, saying :—

“ Striking me from behind, what merit dost thou hope to earn by this, O Thou who hast inflicted a mortal wound on me, while I was engaged in combat with another ? ’ The virtuous Rama is full of nobility, generosity and valour ; he is compassionate, devoted to the welfare of all beings, fixed in his duty ; gracious, omnipotent and conversant with the rules of conduct and austerity ; these are the praises sung of thee, these are the merits attributed to thee by the whole world !

“ Self-mastery, forbearance, loyalty, fixity of purpose, goodwill and heroism are the virtues of kings, O Prince, as also the repression of evil deeds. It was reflecting on these virtues, believing them to be thine, that I came to fight Sugriva. ‘ Whilst I am filled with rage and engaged in combat with



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another, he will not attack me' was my conviction, even without knowing thee. Now I perceive that thou art a perverse creature, feigning piety whilst in truth thou art like a well concealed in the grass, without faith and resorting to evil deeds. Outwardly virtuous, wearing the cloak of integrity, thou art in reality a scoundrel, like a fire bidden by ashes, nor do I recognize thee behind the concealing mask of virtue.

"Since I have neither laid waste thy land, nor thy city and have not offered thee insult, why hast thou destroyed me—I who am guiltless and who have ever fed on fruit and roots, a monkey dwelling in the forest, who never sought to enter into combat with thee but who was engaged in fighting another? Thou art the son of a king and inspired confidence by thy benign aspect and, what is more, thou wearest the livery of sanctity; who of the warrior caste, conversant with what is good and evil, in the garb of a righteous man, would commit such a wicked deed?

"Thou art born of the House of Raghu and art spoken of as virtuous, how canst thou, assuming the guise of an ascetic, wander about thus? Equanimity of soul, liberality, forbearance, justice, loyalty, constancy and courage are the characteristics of a king, O Prince, also the meting out of punishment to the guilty.

"We live in the forest, O Rama, and are but wild beasts who feed on roots and fruits, which is natural to us; but thou art a man, O Prince! Land, gold and beauty are the causes of discord, but here in the woods, who will envy us fruit and roots? In temporal and spiritual matters, as well as in the dispensing of reward and punishment, a king should be wholly given up to the task of government and not dominated by any desire for pleasure, but thou art consumed by thy desires; irascible, restless, disregarding the royal code, thy bow is thy cherished argument! Thou dost not pursue the path of duty nor does thine understanding concern itself with the interests of the people; a slave to lust, thou dost permit thy senses to rule thee, O Chief of Men. In a word, Kakutstha, thou hast slain me, who never did thee any harm! How wilt thou answer in the assembly of the virtuous, having committed this reprehensible deed?

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“ The regicide, the brahmanicide, the slayer of the cow, the thief and the one who finds pleasure in the destruction of other beings, the unbeliever and the one who weds before his elder brother, all these enter hell. The informer, the miser, the one who slays his friend or defiles his Guru’s bed, undoubtedly descends to the region of evil-doers !

“ It is not permitted to the well-born to clothe themselves in my skin, nor may those, such as thou, partake of my flesh if they follow the tradition. There are five kinds of animals possessing five nails on each paw that may be enjoyed by the brahmin and the warrior, O Rama. They are the porcupine, the hedgehog, the deer, the hare and the tortoise. O Rama, men of worth will not touch my skin or bones nor eat my flesh.

“ Alas ! I disregarded Tara, who, sagacious and prudent, offered me sound counsel, but in my folly, overpowered by fate, I did not heed it. O Kakutstha, like a virtuous woman who has married a man devoid of faith, the earth is without a protector, since thou art its protector. How canst thou be born of the magnanimous Dasaratha, seeing that thou art deceitful, mischievous, evil-hearted and treacherous ? Having exceeded the bounds of restraint, broken the law of the virtuous and disregarded the goad of justice, that elephant, Rama, has struck me down. Guilty of such an infamy, condemned by the wise, finding thyself in their presence, what wilt thou say ?

“ That valour that has been so greatly vaunted to us who are neutral, I do not see thee exercising against evil-doers ! If thou hadst fought me openly, O Prince, thou wouldst now find thyself in the presence of death, having been slain by me. Thou didst overcome me by taking me unawares, as a serpent bites a sleeping man, I who was else invincible. Thou art ruled by evil. In order to gratify Sugriva, thou hast struck me down.

“ If thou hadst first confided thy purpose to me, I would have brought Sita back to thee in a day. Not only this, but I should have placed that wicked ravisher of thy spouse, the titan, Ravana, in thy power, a chain round his neck, having laid him low in combat. Even if Sita had been cast into the bottom of the sea or hell itself, I should have brought her back to thee at thy command, as Vishnu recovered the scriptures that had been borne away by Hayagriva.

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“Sugriva would have obtained the throne legitimately on my departure to the celestial realm, whereas now he has acquired it wrongfully, since thou hast overcome me by craft on the field of battle. As death in this world is inevitable, I hold it as naught but how wilt thou justify thy conduct towards me?”

Thus, pierced by an arrow, his features altered, did that magnanimous son of the Monarch of Monkeys speak whilst looking on Rama, who was as radiant as the sun, after which he fell silent.

### CHAPTER 18

#### *Rama answers Bali*

SUCH was the speech, dictated by a sense of duty and his own interests, full of censure and harsh in tone, that Bali, who was mortally wounded, made to Rama. Resembling the sun shorn of its rays or a parched cloud or a fire that has been extinguished, that illustrious King of the Monkeys, endowed with justice and reason, having upbraided Rama with severity, was addressed by him in the following words:—

“O Bali, why dost thou inveigh against me like a child, since thou art wholly ignorant of the traditions of duty, profit and social convention?<sup>1</sup> Without consulting thine elders, who are held in respect by the brahmins, in thy simian folly thou hast presumed to address me thus, who am filled with good-will towards thee.

“This earth belongs to the Ikshwakus, together with its mountains, forests and woods and they have jurisdiction over the wild beasts, birds and men. It is ruled by the virtuous Bharata, who is fixed in his duty and fully conversant with the law, with the proper means to acquisition of wealth and the right pursuit of pleasure and who is ever engaged in repressing evil-doers and recompensing the virtuous. It is the duty of a king to develop the art of government, be established in

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary under *Dharma, Artha, Kama*.

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virtue, be endowed with valour and know how to estimate time and place. We other princes carry out his righteous commands and range the whole earth in our desire to promote the law. When that Lion among Men, Bharata who cherishes equity, rules the entire world, who would dare to commit an injustice? Fixed in our supreme duty, obedient to Bharata's will, in accord with the law, we put down transgression. Thou hast violated justice and thy conduct is condemned by all, lust being thine only mentor, ignoring as thou dost the royal path.

"One who pursues the path of duty should regard his elder brother, the one who has given him birth and the one who instructs him in wisdom as his three fathers. Righteousness demands that a younger brother, a son and a virtuous disciple should be regarded as one's own offspring; even for the virtuous, duty is subtle and not easy to grasp, the soul residing in the heart alone knows what is right and wrong.

"O Heedless Monkey, thou art surrounded by irresponsible simian counsellors, who are unable to control themselves, thus it is a case of the blind leading the blind, how canst thou learn from them? I am speaking frankly to thee; thou hadst no possible right to reproach me in my wrath. Learn now for what reason I struck thee down.

"Thou hast acted in opposition to the spiritual law. While Sugriva yet lives, thou hast had marital relations with Ruma, who is thy sister-in-law. O Perverse Wretch, in order to satisfy thy lust, thou hast transgressed the law of righteousness and, O Monkey, since thou hast not respected thy brother's wife, this retribution has followed thee. I see no other means of restraining him who acts contrary to the interests of his subjects and does not conform to the social code but by punishment, O King of the Monkeys!

"Being a warrior of an illustrious race, I am unable to brook thy villainy. The man who makes his daughter, his sister or his sister-in-law an object of lust, is punishable by death; this is the law!

"Though Bharata is the supreme monarch, we carry out his behests. How canst thou who hast broken the law, escape punishment? He who fails to listen to his instructor in the form of the law, will be judged according to the law by the King.

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“Bharata seeks to repress dissolute customs, and we who carry out his commands fully try to bring to justice those who, like thee, overstep the boundaries of the law, O Chief of the Monkeys.

“Sugriva is my friend and equal to Lakshmana ; it is for the recovery of his wife and kingdom that he entered into a pact of friendship with me. In the presence of his ministers, I pledged my word ; how can a man like myself fail to meet these obligations ?

“For all these reasons based on the law, thou canst judge for thyself, whether thy punishment is merited or no. That it is wholly just, thou wilt be forced to admit and, further, that one is bound to help a friend if one acknowledges one’s duty. Thou wouldst have done likewise if thou hadst followed the law. Two of the verses of Manu are specially devoted to these rules of conduct and are known to the authorities of the law ; I have been faithful to them. ‘Those men who, having done wrong, submit to the penalty imposed by the king, are washed free from every stain and ascend to heaven like the good and those who do benevolent deeds. Further punishment or pardon exonerates the thief from his fault, but the king who does not put down vice himself assumes the guilt.’

“My worthy ancestor Mandhata voluntarily underwent a terrible expiation for a monk who was guilty of an offence similar to thine whom he pardoned. Other monarchs, in their folly, have also done wrong, but have practiced penance ; it is by this means that passion is subdued. But enough of recriminations ! Thy death has been decreed in accordance with the spiritual law, O Lion among Monkeys ; we are not acting on personal impulse.

“Listen to a further reason, O Valiant Bull among Monkeys ; having grasped its significance, thou wilt no longer be able to reproach me. Neither did I follow mine own whim, nor did I act hastily, nor in anger.

“Snares, nets and traps of every kind, either open or concealed, are used to catch innumerable wild beasts, whether they be fleeing in terror, or, unafraid, are standing still. Whether these beasts are maddened with fear or no, they who feed on flesh run them through without pity while their

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back is turned ; it does not seem to me that they are at fault. In this world, even royal Rishis, versed in their duty, indulge in the chase. This is why, with a single arrow, I struck thee down while engaged in combat with thy brother, O Monkey. What boots it, whether thou didst enter into combat with me or no, since thou art but a monkey.

“Unquestionably it is kings who dispense the unwritten law and happiness in life, O Best of Monkeys ! One should never reproach them, nor address them disrespectfully, nor disregard them ; they are Gods who, assuming human form, dwell on earth ! But thou in thine ignorance of the law, dominated by anger, didst insult me, who have ever conformed to the established tradition of mine ancestors.”

Hearing Rama's words, Bali, deeply mortified, no longer sought to denounce the son of Raghu, the task of duty now having been rendered clear to him, and with joined palms that King of the Monkeys answered him, saying :—

“Undoubtedly, O First of Men, what thou hast uttered is truth ! To gainsay an eminent personage is not permitted to one who is of common stock. It was in ignorance that I formerly addressed thee in disrespectful terms. Do not hold it against me, O Raghava, thou who art conversant with the significance and implication of things and devoted to the welfare of all. In the serenity of thine understanding, that nothing disturbs, the working out of cause and effect are known to thee. O Thou whose speech accords with justice and who art conversant with duty, rescue me who am fallen and the first of those to transgress the law.”

In a voice strangled with sobs, Bali, groaning, expressed himself with laboured effort, his eyes fixed on Rama, and resembled an elephant sinking in a morass.

“I am not concerned for myself or Tara or my relatives, as much as for my virtuous son, Angada, of golden bracelets. Beholding me no more, that unfortunate one, who has been so cherished from childhood, will pine away with grief, like a pool whose waters have dried up. He is yet young and his understanding has not yet matured ; he is my only son and most dear to me. Tara is his mother, O Rama ; do thou protect that powerful Angada.

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“Show extreme kindness to Sugriva and Angada ; be their guardian and their guide, O Thou who art fully conversant with the laws of righteousness and unrighteousness. What thou wouldst perform for Bharata and Lakshmana, do for Sugriva and Angada.

“See that Sugriva does not hold the sagacious Tara responsible for the fault I have committed or fail to treat her with respect. Under thy protection, let him govern the kingdom and, living obedient to thy counsels, he will attain heaven as well as rule the earth. As for myself, despite Tara’s words, I wished to receive death at thine hands and came forth to enter into a duel with my brother Sugriva.”

Having spoken thus to Rama, the now humble King of the Monkeys became silent.

Then Rama consoled Bali who was still fully conscious and spoke to him in a gentle voice, expressing the essence of spiritual and secular wisdom, saying :—

“Have no anxiety either on our behalf or thine own, O Best of Monkeys. We know what should be done, above all in that which concerns thee. He who punishes the guilty and he who is guilty and pays the penalty have both fulfilled the purpose of cause and effect and therefore eschew calamity. Thus, thanks to the punishment that frees them from all taint, they regain their immaculate nature by the very path which paved the way to the penalty.

“Put away grief, bewilderment and fear with which thine heart is filled ; thou canst not avoid thy fate, O Chief of the Monkeys. What Angada was to thee, O King of the Monkeys, he will be to Sugriva and myself ; do not doubt it.”

The magnanimous Rama, intrepid in combat, uttered these words full of tenderness and benignity, in accord with righteousness, and the dweller in the forest answered him humbly, saying :—

“Pierced by thine arrow, my mind bewildered, I insulted thee without knowing what I was doing, O Lord, Thou whose immeasurable valour is equal to Mahendra’s ! Be pacified and pardon me, O Veritable Sovereign of the Monkeys.”

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## CHAPTER 19

### *Tara's Grief*

THE mighty King of the Monkeys, who lay pierced by an arrow, did not reply further to Rama's judicious words. His limbs crushed by rocks, severely bruised by the trees that Sugriva had hurled at him, transfixed by Rama's shaft, at the point of death, he swooned away.

Tara, learning that he had been struck down by an arrow discharged by Rama in the struggle and receiving the distressing tidings that her lord lay dying, with a troubled heart hastily emerged with her son from the rocky cavern. The monkeys who followed Angada, however, on seeing Rama with his bow, ran away in fear.

Perceiving those monkeys fleeing in terror, like deer that scatter when the leader of the herd falls dead, Tara, though herself distraught, rallied the frightened monkeys, who sought to escape from Rama, as if his shafts had already been discharged at them, and said :—

“ O Monkeys, you are the servants of that Lion among Monarchs ; why are you abandoning all and flying in disorder? Has Bali not been laid low by his wicked brother on account of the throne ? It was from afar that Rama loosed his far-reaching arrow ! ”

Thus did the consort of Bali speak, and those monkeys, who were able to change their shape at will, answered with one voice in words fitting to the occasion, saying :—

“ O Thou, who art the mother of a living son, return home and protect Angada ! Death, in the form of Rama, has struck Bali down and is bearing him away. Having launched a volley of immense trees and great rocks, Bali fell, borne down by arrows that resembled the lightning. Beholding that Lion among Monkeys overcome, him whose prowess was equal to Indra's, the whole army of monkeys has taken to flight. Let the warriors save the city and install Angada as king ! The



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monkeys will obey Bali's son, who will take his place. If these conditions do not meet with thine approval, O Lady of agreeable looks, then the monkeys will seek other inaccessible retreats. Amongst those who live in the forest, some have no wives, others have common wives, but we fear those who have been deprived of their wives and still desire them."<sup>1</sup>

As they were but a short distance away, that Lady of Sweet Smiles heard them and answered with dignity, saying :—

" Since that Lion among Monkeys is dying, of what use to me is my son or the entire kingdom ? I shall seek out the feet of that magnanimous hero whom Rama has slain with a single arrow."

Speaking thus, overcome with grief, beating her head and breast with her two hands and weeping, in her distress she rushed towards him and, still running, beheld her lord lying on the earth, he, the slayer of the foremost of monkeys, who never turned back in battle; he, who was able to hurl great mountains, as Vasava discharges his thunderbolt with all the fury of a storm, roaring the while like a great mass of thunder, clouds; he whose valour was equal to Shakra's; that hero pierced by a single arrow, lay on the earth, like the leader of antelopes a tiger has struck down for its prey, or like a place of sacrifice, held sacred by all, with its banners and its altars laid waste by Suparna on account of a serpent.

Then Tara beheld the mighty Rama leaning on his bow, standing with his younger brother and the brother of her lord, and, beside herself with grief, she approached her spouse, who had fallen on the battlefield and, seeing him lying there, was overcome by distress and fell to the ground. Then, rising as if newly waking from sleep, seeing her lord caught in the noose of death, sobbing, she cried out : " O King ! "

Her piercing cries, resembling an osprey's, moved Sugriva deeply, as did the presence of Angada also.

<sup>1</sup> A reference to Sugriva.

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### CHAPTER 20

#### *Her Lamentations*

SEEING her lord lying on the earth, pierced by that death-dealing arrow discharged by Rama, Tara, whose face resembled the moon, approaching him, embraced him. At the sight of Bali, who lay like an elephant wounded by an arrow, that monkey resembling a huge mountain or an uprooted tree, Tara poured out her heart, torn with grief, in lamentation :—

“ O Thou who wert full of valour in combat ! O Hero ! O Best of Monkeys ! It is because of my recent importunities that thou wilt not now speak to me ! Rise, O Lion among Monkeys and rest on a comfortable couch ! Those great monarchs, thine equals, do not sleep on the earth ; or is the earth thy cherished love, since even in dying thou dost lie by her and scornest me ?

“ Without doubt, O Warrior, thanks to thy great exploits, thou hast founded another and more glorious Kishkindha in heaven ! The pleasures we once shared in the woods and in the fragrant bowers are henceforth at an end. I am bereft of all joy and hope and sunk in a sea of sorrow, since thou, the King of Kings, art returning to the five elements.<sup>1</sup> My heart must be made of stone, since, seeing thee lying on the earth, grief does not cause it to break into a thousand pieces. Thou didst steal away Sugriva’s consort and sent him into exile ; it is the fruit of this double fault that thou art now expiating, O Chief of the Monkeys !

“ Intent on thy welfare, I submitted to thy senseless reproaches ; I, who in the desire to be of service to thee gave thee nought but wise counsel, O Indra of Monkeys ! Now, O Proud Lord, beguiled by their youthful and seductive beauty, thou art moving the hearts of the Apsaras. It is irrevocable fate which this day has put an end to thine existence ; thou whom Sugriva could not vanquish hast resigned thyself to its power !

<sup>1</sup> The body being said to rejoin the elements at death.

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“Having without cause struck down Bali who was engaged in combat with another, though it is censurable, Kakutstha has no regrets. I who, till now, did not know distress, deprived of thy support, at the height of misfortune, must pass my life as a widow. What will the fate of Angada be, the object of my tenderness, a valiant though youthful prince accustomed to pleasure, now at the mercy of his paternal uncle, who is filled with anger against us? Look long on thy virtuous Sire, O My Beloved Son! Soon thou shalt see him no more.

“And Thou, O comfort thy son, give him counsel, embracing his brow before thou departest on thy last journey! Assuredly Rama has accomplished a great feat in striking thee down, but he is guiltless, for all he did was to obey Sugriva. O Sugriva, rejoice, regain possession of Ruma and enjoy the kingdom without hindrance; thy brother, thine adversary, is wounded unto death.

“But Thou, O My Beloved, why dost thou not answer my complaint? See, thy numerous and lovely wives surround thee, O King of the Monkeys.”

Hearing Tara's lamentations, those unfortunate women, placing Angada in their midst, emitted pitiful cries on every side. Then Tara spoke once again, saying:—

“How canst thou abandon Angada, O Thou whose powerful arms are decorated with bracelets, and go forth on thy last journey thus? It is not meet to abandon a son who possesses thy virtues and is aimiable and handsome. If inadvertently I have offended thee, O Long-armed Hero, then forgive me! O Chief of the Monkey Tribe, I lay my head at thy feet.”

Thus did Tara with the other queens lament bitterly at the side of her lord and that lady of matchless beauty resolved to die of hunger lying on the earth at Bali's side.

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### CHAPTER 2 I

#### *Hanuman's Speech*

HANUMAN, however, the Leader of the Monkeys, gently tried to console Tara, who was lying on the earth like a star fallen from the heavens, and said :—

“ The fruits of all that is done under the impulse of virtue or vice must be plucked after death, whether they be good or evil. O Unhappy One, for whom dost thou weep? O Unfortunate One, whom dost thou bewail? For whose life, that bubble, should one mourn? Henceforth the youthful Angada should be the object of thy solicitude, since he alone survives. From now on, thou shouldst concern thyself on his account and render him fitting service. Thou knowest well how uncertain is the future of all beings; therefore it is for thee to perform noble deeds here, who art conversant with thy duty and who art a stranger to common acts !

“ He under whom hundreds and thousands of monkeys lived has now reached the uttermost bourne of his destiny, and since he fulfilled the injunctions laid down by the law and was distinguished for his impartiality, his liberality and his tolerance, he now dwells among the virtuous conquerors. Why shouldst thou mourn for him? O Irreproachable One, thou hast now become the protectress of all the leading monkeys, thy son, and also this kingdom of the apes and bears. Little by little do thou console these two (Sugriva and Angada) who are afflicted, and under thy tutelage, O Fair Lady, let Angada rule the earth.

“ To ensure the future and reflect on the present is the whole duty of a prince; it is so decreed by destiny. Angada should be installed as King of the Monkeys and be anointed. Seeing thy son seated on the throne, thy peace of mind will be restored.”

Hearing these words, Tara, who was torn with grief on account of her lord, answered Hanuman, who stood at her side, saying :—

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“I would rather cling to the body of this hero than a hundred sons like Angada. I am not able to govern the monkeys nor is he ; such a duty devolves on his paternal uncle, Sugriva. O Hanuman, it is not for me to confer the kingdom on Angada ; the true relative of the son in succession to his father is the uncle, who stands as a second father to him and not the mother, O Foremost of Monkeys. There is nought better for me in this world or in the next than to take refuge near the King of the Monkeys, my lord ; it is fitting for me to share the bed of him who has fallen facing the foe.”

### CHAPTER 22

#### *Bali's last Words*

BALI, whose breathing was scarcely perceptible and who was sighing faintly, glanced round and discerned his younger brother, Sugriva, before him. Addressing him whose victory had assured him of the possession of the dominion of the monkeys, he spoke in clear and affectionate tones, saying :—

“O Sugriva, do not approach me with any evil intent, I who was carried away by a fatal loss of understanding. It would seem to me, O My Friend, that it was not our destiny to live at peace with one another ; though friendship is natural between brothers, yet with us it has been different. To-day, thou wilt regain the kingdom of the forest-dwellers, whereas I, mark well, am leaving this world and going to the region of death. Not only am I abandoning in an instant, life, kingdom and great prosperity but also a reputation without stain. At this supreme moment, I make an appeal to thee and, difficult though it is, it must be done, O Valiant Prince.

“See, stretched on the earth, his face bathed in tears, Angada, who is worthy of happiness, brought up in luxury and, though a child, possessing nought that pertains to childhood ! Do thou protect him from all peril, he who is my son and dearer to me than life, the issue of my loins and whom I now abandon, though he does not merit abandonment. Be

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his father, his benefactor and his guardian in all circumstances and in danger be his refuge, as I have ever been, O Chief of the Monkeys !

“ Born of Tara, that fortunate prince, thine equal in valour, shall precede thee in the destruction of the titans. That youthful Angada, Tara’s son, that valiant hero, whose prowess is great, will manifest it in deeds of valour worthy of me. Further, when the daughter of Sushena (Tara), of profound discernment and conversant with future happenings, bids thee saying : ‘ Do this, it is right ’, do so without hesitation. There is no presentiment of Tara’s that does not come to pass.

“ Whatever Raghava proposes, do thou carry out with the same resolution ; it were wrong to disobey him and he will punish thee for thy contempt. Take this golden chain, O Sugriva ; the glorious Shri who dwells in it will leave it at my death.”<sup>1</sup>

Hearing Bali’s affectionate and brotherly words, Sugriva was bereft of joy and grew sad, resembling the moon in eclipse. Pacified by Bali and anxious to act in a fitting manner, on his brother’s request, he took off the golden chain.

Having thus made over this mark of royalty, Bali, at the point of death, gazing on his son Angada, who stood before him, addressed him tenderly, saying :—

“ Do thou act in a manner fitting to the time and place. Suffer pleasure and pain with equanimity ; in joy and sorrow be obedient to Sugriva. Assuredly, O Long-armed Warrior, thou hast ever been cherished by me, but it is not by living thus that thou wilt earn Sugriva’s respect. Do not ally thyself with those who are not his friends, still less his foes, O Conqueror of Thine Enemies ! Be loyal to Sugriva, thy master, with thy senses fully controlled and ever be attentive to his interests. Be not inordinately attached to any nor hold any in contempt ; both extremes are a great error, therefore pursue the middle course.” With these words, suffering intensely from the arrow, his eyes staring wildly, his great teeth chattering, Bali expired.

Then a great tumult arose among the monkeys, thus deprived of their leader, and all the forest dwellers gave vent to lamentations, saying :—

<sup>1</sup> Shri or Lakshmi, the Consort of Vishnu and Goddess of Prosperity.

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“Henceforth Kishkindha is nought but a desert, the King of Monkeys having ascended to heaven; his gardens are but a wilderness, as are the mountains and the woods. That Lion of Monkeys has passed away; the forest-dwellers are stripped of their glory.

“He engaged the illustrious and long-armed Golaba, the Gandharva, in a terrible battle lasting ten years and yet another five; that struggle did not cease day or night; then in the sixteenth year, Golaba was struck down, that foolhardy one falling under the blows of Bali of strong teeth. How has he who protected us from all peril fallen in his turn?

“That valiant Leader of Monkeys being slain, the forest-dwellers will not be able to find any safe place of refuge, like kine in the midst of a lion-infested forest.”

On hearing these words, Tara, who was submerged in an ocean of grief, gazing on the face of her dead lord, fell to the earth, embracing Bali like a creeper clinging to an uprooted tree.

### CHAPTER 23

#### *Tara weeps over the Body of Bali*

THEREUPON, smelling the face<sup>1</sup> of that King of the Monkeys, Tara, who was renowned throughout the whole world, addressed her dead consort, saying:—

“Not having followed my counsel, O Warrior, thou art now stretched on the rough, hard and stony ground. Hast thou then chosen the earth as thy love rather than myself, since thou now liest embracing it, whereas to me thou dost not utter a single word?

“Alas! Fate has favoured Sugriva, that valiant One, whose noble exploits will now cause him to be regarded as a hero. The Leaders of the Bears and Monkeys pay homage to thy prowess! Hearing their cries of distress and those of the

<sup>1</sup> A traditional salutation.

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unfortunate Angada and myself, why dost thou not wake? Having been slain in combat, thou sleepest on that hard bed, the place where formerly thine enemies rested struck down by thy blows. O My Beloved, thou art the offshoot of a glorious race renowned for its heroism; thou, for whom war was but a sport, art gone, leaving me alone without a protector, O Proud Monarch! Nay, a wise man should never give his daughter in marriage to a warrior. Mark how I, wedded to a Kshatriya, am about to die, having been made a widow. My pride is humbled, and from this moment the path to everlasting life is closed to me. I am submerged in an ocean of grief without ground or bourne! How hard is my heart that, even seeing my dead lord, it does not break into a thousand fragments—my friend, my lord, naturally dear to me, that hero, who, falling on the field of honour under the blows of a warrior more powerful than he, has returned to the five elements. The woman who loses her consort, even if she have sons and be endowed with wealth, is yet a widow, say the wise. O Hero! Thou art lying enveloped in the blood that flows from thy limbs, as thou wert formerly with the scarlet silk of thy couch. Dust and gore covers thy body on every side, so that I cannot hold thee in mine arms, O Bull amongst Plavagas.

“To-day, Sugriva has achieved the purpose for which he engaged thee in this formidable struggle. A single arrow discharged by Rama freed him from all fear. That shaft that pierced thine heart now prevents me from embracing thy body and I can but gaze on thee, who art rejoining the five elements.”

At that moment the General Nala drew out from the corpse the arrow which resembled an angry snake issuing from a mountain cave and glittered as he withdrew it, like the sun whose rays have been intercepted by the peak of a mountain. Thereupon streams of blood instantly began to flow again from those wounds on every side, resembling the water of a river that is stained by the sandstone washed down from a mountain.

Tara, wiping off the dust of combat with which he was soiled, washed her brave lord with the tears that welled up in her eyes, while she gazed lovingly down on him lying there,



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pierced by Rama's arrow, his limbs all covered with blood. Then, addressing her son Angada, whose eyes were red, she said to him :—

“ Behold the bitter end of thy sire, O My Son ! How tragic it is ! This is the outcome of an hostility born of perfidy ! This body, gleaming like the sun about to rise, has entered the region of death. Embrace that proud monarch, O My Son ! ”

At these words, Angada rising, seized hold of the feet of his father with his rounded arms, saying :—“ It is I, Angada ! When I embraced thee formerly thou didst say ‘ Live long, O My Son ’, why dost thou not speak to me thus now ? ”

Then Tara said :—“ Here I stand beside thine inanimate body, like a cow with its calf beside a bull that a lion has just slain ! I do not see the gift that the King of the Gods bestowed on thee when gratified by his victory over the Asura, that glorious chain of gold, why is this ? Thou shalt not be robbed of the insignia of royalty even after death, O Proud Monarch, for the King of the Mountains continues to glow after the sun has set.

“ Thou didst not follow my sage counsel and I was unable to restrain thee. Thy death on the battlefield has brought about mine own and my son's also. The Goddess of Prosperity<sup>1</sup> has renounced both thee and me.”

### CHAPTER 24

#### *Sugriva's Remorse*

SEEING Tara submerged in the fathomless ocean of grief, Bali's younger brother was filled with remorse for his tragic end and overcome with distress, his face bathed in tears, in her presence, slowly approached Rama surrounded by his attendants.

Raghava, bearing all the marks of royalty, stood apart, full of dignity and majesty, bearing his bow and arrows, which resembled serpents, in his hands.

<sup>1</sup> Lakshmi who was said to have resided in the golden chain that Indra had bestowed on Bali.

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Then Sugriva addressed him, saying :—" In accord with thy promise, O Indra among Men, thou didst accomplish this deed, the results of which are here made manifest. In the midst of my triumph, O Prince, in the presence of the slain, my spirit is troubled. On account of the dead monarch, his chief queen is wailing piteously, the city is giving vent to lamentation and Angada is plunged in affliction ; all this, O Rama, robs sovereignty of any delight for me.

" At first, anger, resentment and extreme vexation caused me to view the death of my brother with satisfaction, but soon, in the presence of the corpse of that King of the Monkeys, a great sadness seized me, O First of the House of Ikshwaku. Now it is made clear to me that it would have been better to continue to live as I formerly did on the lofty summit of the Rishyamuka mountain, than slay my brother.

" ' I have no desire to destroy thee ! Begone ! ' were the words that magnanimous warrior addressed to me. This utterance was worthy of him, O Rama, and I, by killing him, have acted vilely. How can any, even if he be devoid of virtue, approve the murder of a brother or balance the happiness experienced on attaining a kingdom with the grief suffered by his death. Unquestioningly he had no intention of slaying me, being too great of soul, but in my perversity I have robbed him of his life.

" In the struggle, when, under the blows of the trees, I was about to succumb and cried out, he at once reassured me, saying : ' Do not repeat thine impudence ; go hence ! '

" He was ever filled with brotherly affection, nobility and justice, whereas I was full of anger, envy and the natural characteristics of a monkey.

" That which should be excluded from one's thoughts, feelings, desires and conduct is what I have harboured in murdering my brother, a crime equal to the slaying of Vishwarupa by Indra. But Indra's guilt was shared by the earth, the trees and the waters as well as women, whereas who is able to share mine ? Who would wish to bear the weight of the sin of a Deer of the Trees ?

" I am not worthy to be held in honour by the people, nor to be allied to the kingdom, still less do I merit the throne,

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having committed such an infamous deed that entails the destruction of one of mine own race.

"I have perpetrated a vile and ignoble act, condemned by the whole world. An overwhelming sorrow fills me, as torrential rain fills a ravine. I am crushed by the bank of a river that has been trodden down by an intoxicated elephant, whose back and tail are the murder of my blood-brother, whose trunk, eyes, head and tusks are the remorse bearing me away.

"This sin, the weight of which is intolerable, O Prince, O Son of the House of Raghu, has destroyed all that is best in my heart, as fire consumes gold, leaving only dross. The company of the great leaders of monkeys, O Prince, are half dead through my fault and also on account of the violent despair of Angada.

"Rare indeed is a son as obedient as Angada, but a son is easily acquired ; where however in the world can one akin to a blood brother be found, O Hero? To-day, if Angada, that Chief of Warriors, and his mother live, she, though overcome with grief will surely care for him, for bereft of him she would die. As for me, I wish to enter the blazing pyre in order to regain the affection of my brother and his son.

"Those leaders of monkeys will set out in search of Sita whenever thou commandest. O Son of that Indra among Men, I, the Destroyer of my Race, who am no longer worthy to live after committing this outrage, bid thee farewell, O Rama."

Hearing the words of the wretched Sugriva, Bali's brother, that noble descendant of the House of Raghu, Rama, began to weep, he, the Destroyer of Hostile Armies, for his mind was troubled. Thereafter, glancing here and there, that support of the earth, the protector of the world, Rama, in the midst of his distress, observed Tara groaning under the load of her affliction.

The chief queen of that Lion among Monkeys, of lovely eyes, was lying beside her lord, whom she held in her arms. Then the first of the ministers raised up that valiant consort of the King of the Monkeys, and she, trembling as they separated her from her lord, whom she was embracing, beheld Rama, whose radiance equalled the sun's, standing with his bow and arrows in his hand.

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Adorned with all the distinguishing marks of royalty, that large-eyed prince, whom she had never yet beheld, that first of heroes, was recognized by Tara, whose eyes resembled a doe's, and she reflected 'It is Kakutstha!'

Then that noble and unfortunate lady, who had so suddenly been plunged into affliction, tottering, approached the one who was the equal of Indra, inaccessible and all powerful. The venerable Tara, her beautiful frame wasted with grief, drawing near to the pure-souled Rama, who by his valour ever attained his end in combat, addressed him thus :—

"Thou art of immeasurable courage, unapproachable, master of thy senses and of supreme faith ; thy fame is imperishable, thou art full of wisdom and the support of the earth ! Thine eyes are the colour of blood ; thou bearest a bow and arrows in thine hand ; thou art endowed with great strength and strong limbs ; thou hast renounced the concerns of the body in this world in order to enjoy divine attributes. The shaft with which thou didst pierce my beloved lord, now use to destroy me also. When I am dead, I shall be reunited to him ; without me, Bali will never be happy, O Hero. Far from me, even in heaven, amidst the red-haired Apsaras, whose locks are braided in various ways and who are gorgeously attired, he will not be happy, O Thou whose eyes resemble the pure petals of the lotus.

"Thou knowest well that he who is separated from his loved one is wretched ! On account of this, slay me, so that Bali shall not suffer in mine absence. If, in the greatness of thy soul, thou shouldst reflect 'I will not be guilty of slaying a woman', say to thyself, 'She is part of Bali himself' and strike me down. It will not be a woman whom thou hast put to death, O Son of that Indra among Men ! By virtue of the law and according to the different Vedic texts, women are not other than the higher self of man. Therefore the wise say that the gift of a woman is assuredly the greatest of gifts. In this wise thou dost give me back to my dear one in order that I may fulfil my duty to him, O Warrior ; by this offering thou shalt not incur the sin of slaying me.

"Filled with sorrow, bereft of support, left desolate, thou shouldn't not spare my life. The more so that far from that

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sagacious Prince of Monkeys, whose joyful gait resembled an elephant's, with his glorious golden chain, the insigne of supreme majesty, I shall not live long, O Prince."

Thus spoke Tara, and in order to console her, the magnanimous Lord addressed her with wisdom and understanding, saying :—

" O Consort of a Hero, do not grieve ! The whole universe is ordered by the creator ; similarly it is established that the sum of good and evil is ordained by Him, nor do the Three Worlds, obedient to His will, transgress His fixed laws. Because of this, thou wilt attain supreme happiness and thy son become heir-apparent to the kingdom. The Lord has ordained this in the order of things ; the consorts of heroes do not complain."

Thus comforted by the magnanimous and powerful victor of his foes, the wife of the valiant Bali, the gorgeously-attired Tara, ceased to lament.

### CHAPTER 25

#### *Bali's Funeral Rites*

FULL of compassion for Sugriva's distress and that experienced by Tara and Angada, Kakutstha, who was accompanied by Lakshmana, in order to console them, said :—

" It is not by weeping that the happiness of the departed is assured ! Carry out your immediate duty without delay ! By shedding tears, you have observed the demands of social convention ; it is vain to seek to avoid fate. Time<sup>1</sup> is the driving force that orders the world's events ; it is Time that creates all conditions here below. None is the real agent of action and none truly causes action to take place. The world abides by virtue of the dictates of its own inner being. Time is its source, stay and goal. Time does not overstep its own bounds, nor does it suffer decrease. Self-dependent, there is neither kinship nor friendship in it, nor is it restrained by any, nor has it any cause. Assuredly, he who sees clearly is aware of the working of Time. Duty, prosperity and pleasure are subject to Time ; it is on this account that Bali attained his

<sup>1</sup> Time in the form of Destiny.

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own true state. The King of the Plavagas has reaped the fruit of his works, acquired by his merits, through his integrity and liberality. He has attained heaven on account of his observance of duty and he has taken possession of it by sacrificing his life. The Sovereign of the Monkeys has reached the highest state. Thou hast mourned long enough ; now perform the last rites."

When Rama ceased speaking, Lakshmana, the Slayer of His Foes, spoke sagely to Sugriva, who was distraught, saying:—

"O Sugriva, inaugurate the obsequies without delay with the assistance of Tara and Angada. Issue the order that a large quantity of dry wood be gathered together with the sacred sandalwood, for the funeral pyre. Banish indecision ; this city depends on thee. Let Angada bring garlands and robes of every kind, together with butter, oil, perfumes and all that is requisite.

"O Tara, do thou find a palanquin without delay ; prompt action is always praiseworthy, the more so at such an hour. Let those who are skilful and strong, accustomed to palanquins, hold themselves in readiness to bear Bali away."

Having spoken thus to Sugriva, the on of Sumitra, Lakshmana, the Slayer of His Foes, took up his position beside his brother.

Hearing Lakshmana's command, Tara with a beating heart hastened to the cave, bent on finding a litter, and soon returned with one borne by strong monkeys to whom the work was familiar.

It was indeed magnificent, well-cushioned and resembling a chariot, the sides being marvellously decorated and enriched with carved wooden figures. Resting on wonderful supports, it was gorgeously fitted like a palace belonging to the Siddhas and was furnished with windows and balconies that were spacious and embellished with carvings, a work of extreme artistry. Large and well constructed of wood from the mountain-side, priceless ornaments, strings of pearls and splendid crowns gave it a dazzling appearance and it was covered with clay, painted red and sprinkled with sandal-paste. Festooned with wreaths of lotuses, shining like the dawn, it was strewn with innumerable flowers.

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Beholding it, Rama said to Lakshmana :—" Let Bali's body be placed upon it with all speed and let the funeral ceremony proceed." Then Sugriva, weeping, assisted by Angada, raised Bali's body and placed it on the litter. Having laid the corpse on its couch, he covered it with ornaments of every kind together with wreaths and cloths. Thereafter, Sugriva, the King of the Monkeys, commanded that the last rites of his noble brother should be carried out on the banks of a river.

The great monkey leaders preceded the litter, scattering jewels of every kind in profusion. Every honour due to a king of this world was offered by the Vanaras to their lord that day.

Then the funeral rites began immediately, Angada, Tara and the others surrounding the master they had lost. On their side, the women who had lived subject to his authority gathered together crying : " O Hero, O Hero ", thus bewailing the death of their lord.

All the wives of Bali, who had been widowed, with Tara at their head, accompanied their deceased sovereign, lamenting pitifully. Their cries were heard in the depth of the forest and re-echoed through the woods and among the rocks on every side. Then on a deserted sandbank surrounded by water, formed by a torrent issuing from the mountain, innumerable monkeys, inhabitants of the forest, constructed a pyre, and those excellent bearers reverently lowered the litter from their shoulders and all stood round, plunged in mourning.

Seeing her lord lying on the funeral bed, Tara, taking his head in her lap, a prey to extreme grief, began to lament :—

" O Illustrious and Mighty Prince, O My Dear One, look on me ! Why dost thou not cast a single glance on all those who are plunged in sorrow ? Thou smilest even in death, O Noble Hero, and thy countenance resembles the rays of the rising sun ! Death, in the guise of Rama, has struck thee down, O Monkey ! A single arrow discharged by him on the field of battle has made us all widows. Thy wives, present here, who no longer know how to leap, O Indra among Kings, have come this painful road step by step on foot, is it not known to thee ? Dost thou no longer love these women whose radiant looks resemble the moon ? Why dost thou not look

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on Sugriva, O King of the Monkeys ? Here are thy counsellors, O Sovereign, also Tara and the others and the leading citizens surrounding thee, all plunged in grief. Dismiss thy ministers as thou wert wont to do, O Vanquisher of thy Foes, and we will go to the woods with thee in happy dalliance."

Then the women, themselves overwhelmed with affliction, caused Tara to rise.

Assisted by Sugriva, Angada, sobbing, bore his sire to the funeral pyre, his mind distraught with grief, and, igniting the flames according to the traditional rites, keeping his father on his right hand, he circumambulated him, sorrowfully watching him setting forth on his last journey.

Having performed the ritual acts in honour of Bali, that Bull among Monkeys, accompanied by Sugriva and Tara, performed his ablutions.

Associating himself with Sugriva's loss, the mighty Kakutstha, sharing his grief, officiated at the funeral rites.

The body of Bali, chief of heroes, full of glory, whom that descendant of Ikshwaku had slain with his marvellous arrow, having been cremated, Sugriva, whose splendour resembled a clear flame, approached Rama and Lakshmana who accompanied him.

### CHAPTER 26

#### *Sugriva is installed as King*

THE chief ministers encircled Sugriva, who was clad in dripping garments and overcome with grief. Approaching the illustrious Rama of imperishable exploits, he stood before him with joined palms like the Sages before the Grand-sire of the World.

Then Hanuman, the son of Maruta, who resembled a mountain of gold, his face shining like the rising sun, addressed him with profound reverence in the following words :—

"May it please thee, O Kakutstha, to reinstate Sugriva in the vast and impregnable kingdom of his mighty ancestors.



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Be gracious unto him, O Lord, and permit him to return to his magnificent capital. May he regulate his affairs with the co-operation of his many friends.

“After the purificatory bath of perfumes and aromatic herbs of every kind, he will pay thee homage and bestow gifts and garlands and precious gems, scents and herbs on thee. Thou shouldst enter this marvellous cave, carved out of the mountain, and unite these monkeys with a master, thus making them happy !”

Hearing Hanuman's words, Rama, that Destroyer of Hostile Warriors, answered him with wisdom and eloquence, saying :—

“Most beloved Hanuman, in accordance with the behests of my sire I may not enter a village or city for fourteen years. Let Sugriva, that Bull among Monkeys enter that prosperous and glorious city and be installed as king according to the traditional rites !”

Having spoken thus to Hanuman, Rama said to Sugriva :—  
“Thou who art conversant with thy duty, proclaim that noble and valiant hero, Angada, heir-apparent to the kingdom. He is the eldest son of thy elder brother and equal to him in courage ; Angada has a valiant heart and deserves to be thine heir. It is now Shravana, the first month of the rainy season,<sup>1</sup> that brings the floods ; it is no time for military exploits therefore return to thy capital. As for me, I shall live on the mountain with Lakshmana. This cavern, carved out of the rock, is large and airy and possesses a lake whose crystalline waters abound in lotuses of every kind. When the month of Kartika<sup>2</sup> has come, make ready to slay Ravana, this is our pact ; meantime, O Friend, return to thine home and receive the royal anointing, thus gratifying thy friends.”

Thus dismissed by Rama, Sugriva, that Bull among Monkeys penetrated into the enchanting city of Kishkindha of which Bali had been the supreme lord.

Following their sovereign, thousands of monkeys prostrated themselves, touching the dust with their foreheads, and Sugriva, full of valour, called on them to rise, addressing his subjects with affection.

<sup>1</sup> July–August.

<sup>2</sup> October–November.

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That mighty warrior thereafter entered his brother's private apartments and, having come there, the powerful hero, Sugriva, that Bull of Forest-dwellers, was proclaimed king by his friends, as was formerly the God of a Thousand Eyes.

Then they brought him a white canopy, decorated with gold, and two magnificent whisks of yak's tails with gleaming golden handles, also gems of every kind and grain and grass, together with blossoming branches, flowers and rich stuffs, white unguents, fragrant garlands, wild flowers and those that grow in water, sacred sandalwood, varied and numerous perfumes, roasted grain, gold, panic seed, honey, butter, curds, a tiger skin and wonderfully wrought sandals.

Thereafter six lovely young girls, bringing scents, tallow and red and yellow pigments,<sup>1</sup> entered joyfully and distributed gems, raiment and food among the foremost of the twice-born.

Those versed in the sacred formulas then prepared heaps of kusha grass and, igniting a fire, poured out the Soma, purified by the recitation of traditional prayers. Then Sugriva, seated on a gorgeous golden-based throne, covered with rich draperies and a magnificent three-tiered baldaquin, decorated with marvellous garlands, facing the East, was enthroned.

Those Lions among the Forest-dwellers had visited the banks of rivers and streams, far and wide, as well as the sacred places and the seas, in order to draw pure water which they brought back in pitchers of gold.

Employing golden vases and the polished horns of bulls, Gaja, Gavaksha, Gavaya, Sharabha, Gandhamadana, Mainda, Dvidida, Hanuman and Jambavan in accordance with the tradition laid down in the scriptures and on the instructions of the Sages, poured the clear and fragrant water over Sugriva, as formerly the Vasus bathed Vasava of a Thousand Eyes.

When the enthronement was completed, all those illustrious leaders of the monkeys raised a shout of joy again and again. Thereafter, in order to follow Rama's counsel, Sugriva, the King of the Monkeys, embracing Angada, installed him as heir-apparent.

Angada received the investiture, and those magnanimous Plavagas acclaimed him crying "Excellent! Excellent!",

<sup>1</sup> Pigments. Yellow Gorocala used for Tilak; red Manahshila, a form of red arsenic.

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praising Sugriva and the great-souled Rama and Lakshmana. All were overjoyed on this auspicious occasion ; a large and merry crowd, fully satisfied, filled the streets, carrying banners and standards in the enchanting city of Kishkindha, which had been hollowed out of the mountain.

Having informed the illustrious Rama of the great coronation ceremony and being reunited with his consort, Ruma, the heroic leader of the monkey army took possession of his kingdom, like the Chief of the Immortals.

### CHAPTER 27

#### *Rama describes Prasravana*

THE monkey Sugriva, having been crowned king, returned to Kishkindha, whilst Rama retired to the Mountain Prasravana.

That mountain resounded with the cries of tigers and deer, and the roaring of the lions that frequented it was heard day and night ; bushes, diverse creepers and innumerable trees were to be seen everywhere. It was inhabited by bears, lynxes and many kinds of monkeys and resembled a mass of clouds sparkling with light and beauty. On the summit was a large and spacious cave, which Rama, who was accompanied by Saumitri, chose as a dwelling for himself.

Having contracted an alliance with Sugriva, Rama, the irreproachable descendant of the House of Raghu, addressed his brother Lakshmana, the increaser of his delight, in appropriate and significant words, saying :—

“ O Saumitri, Destroyer of Thy Foes ! We should establish ourselves in this agreeable rocky cavern during the rainy season. This peak, the most lofty on this mountain, is enchanting, O Prince ! White, black and dun-coloured crags adorn it and metals of every kind abound, while its rivers swarm with frogs ; it is filled with innumerable trees and charming creepers, where a variety of birds warble and splendid peacocks can be heard ; Malati, Kunda, Sinduvara, Shirishaka, Kadamba, Arjuna and Sarja trees embellish it with their blossom.

“ Here is a lovely pool, festooned with flowering lotus, adjoining the cave, O Prince. Where the rock is hollowed out,

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it inclines to the north east, which will make our stay more agreeable, whilst on the west it is higher and we shall be sheltered from the winds. At the entrance, O Saumitri, is a smooth black stone like a piece of antimony washed in oil; to the north, O Friend, the crest of the mountain is magnificent and looks like a mass of polished collyrium or a stationary cloud. To the south, it stretches like a white veil, resembling Mount Kailasha, rich in metals, which give it a dazzling appearance.

"Observe this river of translucent water like unto Jahnavi on the Mount Trikuta! Candana, Tilaka, Sala, Tamala, Atimuktaka, Padmaka, Sarala and Ashoka trees embellish it; Vanira, Timida, Bakula, Ketaka, Hintala, Tinisha, Nipa, Vetasa and Kritamalaka trees grow on its banks, adorning it on every side, like a woman attired in rich raiment and precious gems.

"Innumerable flocks of birds fill it with their various notes and waterfowl enliven it with their amorous frolics. The river has created enchanting islands which are frequented by swans and cranes; its smiling aspect calls to mind a beautiful woman wearing innumerable ornaments. Here it is carpeted with blue lotuses, there shining with the red and in the distance white water-lilies may be seen. Ducks sport here in their hundreds, whilst peacocks and curlews fill this river, full of charm and colour, with their cries, and groups of sages frequent it.

"See how the Sandal and Kadubha trees grow in clusters of five, as if planned by an intelligent will. Ah! What an enchanting spot! O Saumitri, Thou Scourger of Thy Foes, let us enjoy it to the full and make our retreat a happy one. Kishkindha too is not far from here, that marvellous city of Sugriva's, where songs and the sound of musical instruments are heard, O Most Illustrious of Conquerors! It is the monkey warriors sporting to the sound of drums.

"Having recovered his consort and his kingdom, that monarch of the monkeys, Sugriva, surrounded by his companions, is assuredly celebrating his return to full prosperity."

With these words, Rama with Lakshmana took up their abode on the Mountain Prasravana, where there were innumerable caves and woods.

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Yet despite the beauty and abundance of fruits, Rama was unable to find the least pleasure there. Remembering the woman who had been torn from him and who was as dear to him as his very life's breath, the more now, when the moon was rising over the summit of the mountain, he was unable to sleep, passing the nights on the couch, sighing, his spirit troubled, a prey to constant grief.

Seeing Rama desolate and a victim to profound melancholy, Lakshmana, who was equally afflicted, addressed him in affectionate words, saying :—"Cease to mourn, O Hero, thou shouldst not distress thyself thus. One who grieves is never successful, thou knowest it well. In this world, one should have faith and trust in God, pursue virtue and engage in action, O Raghava ! If thy mind is agitated, thou wilt never be able to overcome that titan, thine adversary, in combat, for he is a crafty fighter.

"Banish thy grief and persist in thine endeavour ; it will be thine to triumph over this demon and his entire family. O Rama, thou canst overthrow the earth with its oceans, forests and mountains, how much more Ravana ! Wait but till the autumn, for it is now the rainy season, then thou shalt destroy him, his kingdom and his kinsfolk. Truly I desire to rekindle thy dormant valour, as at the hour of sacrifice the fire buried beneath the ashes is revived by glowing libations."

This salutary and opportune counsel of Lakshmana's was received by Rama with respect and he answered in tender and friendly accents, saying :—

"O Lakshmana, inspired by devotion, thou hast spoken to me with wisdom and courage. Henceforth I shall manifest that valour no danger is able to subdue. I shall wait for the autumn and in accord with thy counsel depend on Sugriva's willing co-operation and the state of the rivers. He who has rendered a service merits repayment ; the ungrateful who do not honour an obligation lose the respect of the good." With joined palms, Lakshmana listened with approval to this judicious speech and addressed Rama, who had regained his cheerful mien, saying : "Thou speakest truly, O Chief of Men; without fail, that monkey will bring about that which thou desirest. Meantime, while awaiting the autumn, endure

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the rains, resolving to slay thine adversary. Restraining thine anger, let us pass these four months of autumn together, dwelling on the mountain frequented by lions, and then hold thyself in readiness to destroy thine enemy."

### CHAPTER 28

#### *Rama describes the Rainy Season*

HAVING slain Bali and enthroned Sugriva, Rama, who was dwelling on the Malyavat plateau, said to Lakshmana :—

"Now the rainy season is here, see how the heavens are laden with clouds as large as hills. After nine months, the sky, by the action of the sun's rays, has sucked up the waters of the ocean and is now giving birth to the showers.

"Ascending to heaven by the stairway of the clouds, one might decorate the sun with garlands of Kutaja and Arjuna blossom. The sky appears like one wounded, bound with the rags of moisture-laden clouds, stained with the vivid tints of the setting sun, bordered with red. With the gentle breeze as its breath, the saffron colour lent by the twilight and its yellow clouds, the sky seems like one who is sick with love. Tormented by the sun's rays, the earth is shedding tears, like Sita racked by grief. Emerging from the heart of the clouds, cool as camphor, redolent with the fragrance of Ketaka flowers, the balmy winds can, as it were, be sipped from the palms of the hands.

"This mountain of blossoming Arjuna trees, planted with Ketakas and anointed by showers of rain, resembles Sugriva freed from his foes. These mountains, that the dark clouds clothe as with antelope skins, catch the rain drops as the sacrificial thread, their caverns filled with the wind lending them a voice; they resemble studious brahmin disciples reciting the holy Veda.

"Whipped by lightning like unto golden thongs, the sky seems to be crying out in pain. The flash that convulses the breast of that sombre cloud is to me like Sita struggling in the arms of Ravana. When covered by dense cloud, the

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quarters of the sky, so dear to lovers, are blotted out, together with the moon and the stars.

“On the ridges of the mountain, as if drowned in tears, these Kutaja trees in full flower, that sighed for the rain, rekindle love in me in the midst of the grief that overwhelms me.

“The dust has settled and a cold wind blows ; the heat of the summer is allayed ; the martial undertaking of kings is suspended, and travellers have returned to their own country.

“Now the waterfowl, in their haste to regain the Manasa lake, have left with their dear companions. Chariots and other conveyances no longer venture on the roads, deeply rutted by continuous rain.

“Sometimes visible, sometimes invisible, the sky, sown with clouds, looks like a ocean encircled with hills. The streams carrying away the Sarja and Kadamba blossom assume a yellow hue from the metallic deposits of the rocks and pass swiftly on amidst the cry of peacocks.

“The Jambu fruit, full of savour and gilded like a bee, is pleasant to the taste, and ripe mangoes of many tints fall to the ground shaken by the wind. Clouds like high mountains, having the lightning as their banner and cranes for their garlands, give forth a reverberating sound, like great elephants intoxicated with Mada juice who are about to fight.

“The grassy slopes of those forest tracts, revived by the rain where delighted peacocks dance, gleam brightly under the moon at night. Charged with an immense weight of water, clouds surrounded by cranes emit a muttering sound and in constant movement journey on and on, sometimes resting on the mountain tops. In their joyous circling flight, cranes, in love with the clouds, resemble an enchanting garland of lotus flowers suspended in space at the mercy of the breeze.

“The earth with its fresh grass strewn with tiny ladybirds, looks like a woman, whose limbs are swathed in a bright green cloth flecked with red.

“Sleep falls gently on Keshava;<sup>1</sup> the river runs swiftly to rejoin the sea ; the crane is happy to be united with the cloud ; fair ones approach their lovers with joy.

<sup>1</sup> Tradition holds that the Lord Narayana fell into the cosmic sleep in the rainy season, prior to the rebirth of Brahma, who issued from his navel.

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“ See how the groves are rendered gay by the dance of peacocks and how the Kadamba trees are covered with flowers ; bulls, filled with desire, follow the cows and the earth is rendered charming by forests and fields of grain.

“ Rivers rush onwards, clouds discharge their rain, frenzied elephants are trumpeting, the woods grow more fair, lovers yearn for their loved ones, peacocks dance and the monkeys have regained their zest for life. Drunk with the aroma of the blossoming Ketaka trees, amongst the thundering waterfalls, the great elephants mix their amorous trumpeting with the peacocks’ cries.

“ Flowers, bruised by the downpour, are expelling their nectar, that the bees gaily plundered from the branches of the Kadamba, trees and now it is falling drop by drop. With their abundant fruit resembling ashes, full of savour, the boughs of the Jambu tree are swarming with bees.

“ Following the woodland track amidst the hills, the chief of the elephants, hearing the roar of thunder behind him, halts in his tracks, thirsting to fight and, deeming it to be a challenge, turns back in fury.

“ Filled now with the humming bees, now with blue-necked peacocks that dance or great elephants in rut, the woods take on a thousand varying aspects.

“ Abounding in Kadamba, Sarja, Arjuna and Kandala trees, the forest with the ground saturated with water, resembling wine and the intoxicated peacocks that cry and dance, takes on the appearance of a banqueting hall. The raindrops, like pearls, falling in the folds of the leaves, rest there happily, and the many coloured birds drink of them, delighted by this gift from the King of the Gods.

“ The soft humming of the bees, the joyous croaking of the frogs blended with the rumbling thunder of the clouds, resembling the roll of drums, create a veritable orchestra in the forest.

“ The peacocks with their richly decorated tails are the choir, some dancing, some calling, here and there clinging to the tops of the trees.

“ Roused by the sound of thunder, frogs of different shapes and colour waken from hibernation and whipped by the rain, croak loudly.



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“The rivers, frequented by waterfowl, bear away their crumbling banks proud of their speed, and happy in their fullness, rush towards their lord, the ocean.

“Sombre clouds charged with fresh rain melt into each other and resemble the rocks scorched by the forest fire whose bases cohere with those that are equally laid bare.

“Elephants wander in the midst of the charming groves, that are filled with the cries of intoxicated peacocks in the grass sprinkled with ladybirds and planted with Nipa and Arjuna trees. Ardently embracing the lotuses, whose stamens are flattened by the recent showers, the bumble bees eagerly drink the nectar from these and from the Kadamba blossom that has been laid waste. Bull elephants in rut and leaders of kine disport themselves in the forest ; the king of beasts bounds through the thickets and the kings of men are enraptured and forget their cares and anxieties whilst the Chief of the Gods is disporting himself in the clouds. Torrents of rain loosed from the sky, causing the seas and rivers to overflow, flood the streams, lakes and ponds together with the entire earth. With sheets of rain falling and the wind blowing with extreme violence, the banks of the rivers are swept away and the waters surge onwards so that the familiar paths can no longer be trodden.

“Like kings bathed by their servants, great mountains stand under the downpour from the clouds, which resemble ewers emptied by the King of the Celestials assisted by the Wind God, and seen thus, stand forth in all their native splendour.

“The sky, overcast with cloud, renders the stars invisible ; the earth is saturated with the recent rains and the four quarters are shrouded in darkness. The summits of the mountains washed by the rain sparkle, their great cataracts twisting and falling like strings of pearls. Obstructed in their course by the jutting rocks, these mighty waterfalls precipitate themselves from the heights into the valleys like necklaces of pearls that break and scatter. Those rushing torrents, bathing the lower reaches of the rocky crests, fall into immense chasms, where they find themselves imprisoned and spray, resembling strings of pearls, which celestial nymphs have broken in the violence of their emotions, are scattered in unparalleled showers on every side.

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“ Only when the birds withdraw to the trees and the lotus closes, whilst the evening jasmine opens, can one divine that the sun has set behind the Astachala Mountain. Kings postpone their warlike expeditions and even the army, already on the march, halts ; hostilities cease, for the roads are water-logged. It is the month of Prausthapada,<sup>1</sup> when the brahmins who chant the Veda, the singers of the Sama Veda, begin their studies.

“ Assuredly Bharata, the King of Koshala, having collected the revenue and completed the storing of provisions, is now engaged in celebrating the festival of the month of Ashada.<sup>2</sup>

“ The Sarayu river must be overflowing its banks and the current increasing in velocity, like the shouts of acclamation with which Ayodhya will greet my return.

“ Sugriva will be listening with joy to the sheets of rain falling, since he has overcome his adversary, recovered his consort and regained his vast kingdom; but I, O Lakshmana, separated from Sita, exiled from my immense dominion, resemble the bank of a river that has been carried away by the current and precipitated into an abyss.

“ My grief is without bourne, the rains close every avenue and Ravana appears to me a formidable and invincible foe. Unable to travel on these impassable roads, I wish to make no demands on Sugriva despite his devotion, who after prolonged suffering is reunited with his spouse ; I do not desire to press for an interview on account of the urgency of his private concerns.

“ As for that, when he has rested and the time is ripe, Sugriva will of himself remember the help he has promised me, there is no doubt of it. Because of this, I wait hopefully, till the rivers and Sugriva are favourable to me, O Thou who bearest the auspicious marks of royalty !

“ A favour obliges a man to show gratitude ; the ungrateful who fail to honour an obligation wound the heart of honest men.”

Lakshmana, standing with joined palms, fully concurred with these words to which he listened with extreme respect;

<sup>1</sup> Prausthapada—August–September.

<sup>2</sup> Ashada—June–July.

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then addressing the magnanimous Rama with a joyful air, he said :—

“O Prince, the King of the Monkeys will not delay in carrying out the desire thou hast expressed ! Wait for the autumn and let the rainy season pass, re-affirming thy resolution to overcome thine adversary.”

### CHAPTER 29

#### *Hanuman urges Sugriva to honour his Promise*

HANUMAN observed that the heavens had become serene, free from lightning or cloud, filled with the cry of cranes and marvellously illumined by the light of the moon.

Sugriva however, having attained his end, had become indifferent to his duty and proper responsibilities, allowing his mind to engage in lower pursuits. His ambitions fulfilled, he ceased to harbour any solicitude concerning his affairs and gave himself up to enjoyment with women, satisfying every capricious desire.

Having realised his hopes and his fears being allayed, he passed the time by day and by night with his favourite consort Ruma and also Tara who was equally dear to him, as the Lord of the Gods disports himself among the troops of nymphs and musicians. Leaving the administration of the state to his ministers without supervision, his realm not being in peril, he became a slave to sense pleasures.

Seeing this, the resourceful Hanuman, the eloquent son of Maruta, conversant with what ought to be done and knowing the appropriate time for the performance of duty, approaching the King of the Monkeys, who well understood what was placed before him, spoke to him with confidence, in well chosen words inspired by respect and affection, words that were pleasing, full of good sense, practical, true, salutary, in accord with the law and duty, expedient and diplomatic. Even such was the speech of Hanuman, which he addressed to the King of the Monkeys.

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He said :—

“Thou hast recovered thy throne and thy glory and added to the prosperity of thine house; it now remains for thee to concern thyself with thy friends; this is thy duty! He who, recognizing the fitting moment, conducts himself honourably towards his friends, sees the increase of his glory and his power.

“He who treats with equal regard, wealth, sceptre, friends and life itself, O Prince, acquires a vast empire. Let this be thy conduct, establish thyself in the path of honour, this is what thou shouldst do for thy friends in accordance with thy vow.

“He who does not abandon everything in order to occupy himself with the interests of his friends, whatever his aim, enthusiasm or undertakings, is courting failure.

“In the same way, he who allows the occasion for coming to the assistance of his friends to pass is worthless, even if he achieve great things. We are losing this opportunity of serving the interests of our friend Raghava, O Vanquisher of Thy Foes. Let us occupy ourselves with finding Vaidehi. Rama has not reminded thee that the time appointed has gone by, though he is fully conversant with the hour; albeit hard pressed, that sagacious prince has graciously resigned himself, O King!

“It is to Raghava that thou owest the prosperity of thine House, he wields immense influence, his power is immeasurable, his personal attributes incomparable. Render back the service he has done to thee, O Chief of the Monkeys, call together the leaders of thy people! The delay is not yet serious, as long as Rama does not call upon thee to redeem thy promise, but if thou defer till he constrain thee by force, it will be too late.

“Even had he done nought for thee, it would be thy duty to assist him in his quest, O Chief of Monkeys! How much more so after the service he has rendered thee in re-establishing thee on thy throne and slaying Bali.

“Thou art powerful and thy courage is extreme, O Thou who rulest the monkeys and the bears, therefore thou art under a greater obligation to assist Rama.

“Without doubt the son of Dasaratha is able to overcome the Gods, the demons and the great serpents with his arrows, he is merely awaiting the fulfilment of thy vow. It was not without risking his life that he bestowed such happiness on

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thee. Let us scour the earth and, if need be, the sky, in search of Sita. Neither the Devas, Danavas, Gandharvas or Asuras accompanied by the hosts of Maruts, nor the Yakshas are able to make him tremble, much less the titans.

"It is imperative, O Prince of the Tawny-coloured Ones, that thou shouldst try to please Rama with thine whole soul, who is endowed with that power that formerly succoured thee.

"We will not hesitate to enter the subterranean regions beneath the waters nor ascend into the sky if thou commandest it, O King of the Monkeys ! Do thou decree who shall proceed and how and in what order. There are more than ten million monkeys of indomitable strength ready to serve thee, O Irreproachable Prince !"

Hearing these apposite and reasonable words, Sugriva, in his rectitude, made a supreme decision.

Wisely commanding Nila of inexhaustible valour to gather the troops from every quarter, he said :—

"Do thou muster mine entire army with its leaders and generals, whom none can resist, and bring them here immediately. The Plavagas who are stationed on the frontiers are skilled and brave, let them come here, see to it personally that I am instantly obeyed. He who does not present himself within fifteen days from now will be summarily executed, none shall escape.

"With Angada, seek out the veterans, carry out my orders scrupulously."

Having made all these arrangements, the Chief of the Monkeys, the valiant Sugriva, returned to his private apartments.

### CHAPTER 30

#### *Description of Autumn*

SUGRIVA re-entered his palace, and the sky being free from cloud, Rama, who, during the rainy season, had been overcome by the intensity of his grief, gazing on the pure and tranquil moon and the marvellously clear autumnal nights, perceiving

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that Sugriva was leading a life of pleasure and reflecting on his own loss, also that time was passing, fell into a profound melancholy.

Though he soon mastered his mood, yet the wise Raghava remained absorbed in the thought of Sita, and seeing the sky free from cloud taking on a serene aspect, re-echoing to the call of cranes, he began to lament in sorrowful accents. Seated on the jutting ridge of a mountain rich in gold, under the autumnal sky, his thoughts went out to his beloved spouse and he reflected :—

“What joy can my youthful wife experience now, she, who loved the call of the cranes in the forest and imitated their note? In mine absence, how can that tender maid take any delight in the tufts of flowers shining like pure gold, she, who formerly wakened to the cry of the swans? What felicity can Sita of soft speech and tender form enjoy now?

“When she hears the cry of the wild geese, travelling in skeins, what will become of that princess, whose eyes are as large as lotuses? I feel no happiness without Sita, whose eyes resembled the doe’s, when wandering by river, lake and forest, and my beloved in her tenderness will suffer cruelly in mine absence, through the desire that the beauty of autumn inspires.” Thus did that son of a King lament like unto the Saranga bird when it solicits water from Indra.

At that moment, Lakshmana, who had gone out in careful search of fruits, returned from the enchanting mountain slopes and perceiving his elder brother absorbed in sorrowful thoughts, his mind distraught, alone in that solitude, the sagacious Saumitri, who was deeply distressed by the grief of his unfortunate brother, said to him :—

“Why, O Noble Prince, hast thou become a slave to love? Why this reversion of thy former resolution? Thy distress precludes thee from reflecting calmly; tranquillity of mind is essential to carrying out any design; after mature consideration, the time ordained together with the strength of thine ally should be utilised by thee for carrying out thy project without delay, O Friend!

“Nay! The daughter of Janaka supported by thee, will not be of easy access to the foe, O Protector of the Human

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Race. None may approach a blazing fire without being burnt, O Valiant Warrior ! ”

On this, Rama answered the indomitable Lakshmana in characteristic accents that were worthy of him, saying :—

“ Thy words are practical and wise, full of good sense and in accord with duty and the law. We should reflect on how to act without delay ; this quest must be pursued ; when one is powerful, invincible, youthful and valiant, one should have no misgivings concerning one’s success.”

Then recollecting Sita, whose eyes were as large as lotus petals, Rama with a downcast mien again addressed Lakshmana, saying :—

“ The Thousand-eyed God, having saturated the earth with water and caused the grain to germinate, his task accomplished, is now resting. The clouds, which amidst a deep and prolonged rumbling spread over the mountains, forests and cities, letting loose their showers, are stationary, O Prince. The fury of the thunderclouds, resembling intoxicated elephants, black as the leaves of the blue lotus, darkening the ten regions has abated. Swollen with water, the clouds have visited the fragrant groves of Kutaja and Arjuna trees with wind and rain and have now disappeared in their airy flight, O My Friend. The clamour of the herds of elephants, the cry of the peacocks and the sound of the rain have ceased, O Irreproachable Lakshmana.

“ Washed by dense clouds that have removed their impurities, the mountains with their magnificent escarpments shine forth illumined by the moon’s rays.

“ Autumn now manifests her grace in the branches of the Saptachada trees, in the light of sun, moon and stars and in the gait of the majestic elephants, and her influence appears everywhere. In the tufts of lotuses opening to the first rays of the sun, in the scent of the Saptachada flowers, in the music of the humming bees, autumn shines in all her splendour.

“ The geese with their large and graceful wings, friends of the God of Love, have just arrived, covered with the pollen of the lotuses and are walking to and fro on the sandy banks of the rivers, disporting themselves with the swans.

“ In the intoxicated elephants, in the kine, in the tranquilly flowing rivers, autumn is reflected in her myriad aspects.

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Seeing the sky bereft of cloud, the peacocks in the woods, shorn of their caudal beauty, are no longer attracted to their chosen ones and having lost their brilliance, their delight has evaporated and they appear absorbed in their own thoughts.

“The tall trees of sweet fragrance, the tips of whose branches are bent under the weight of their blossom, shining like gold, enchanting to look upon, seem to light up the depth of the forest.

“Accompanied by their females, the great elephants, frequenters of the pools covered with lotuses and the woods, who formerly stood amidst the flowers, intoxicated with ichor, now walk with a slow and languid pace, merged in amorous sport.

“The sky has cleared and is as bright as a drawn sword ; the water in the river flows slowly ; a breeze, refreshing the white water lilies, blows and those regions delivered from the darkness shine forth.

“Freed from mud by the growing warmth of the sun, the soil is covered with a thick dust that the wind carries to a great distance.

“It is the time when kings, at enmity with each other, start on their campaigns.

“Shining with beauty with which the autumn has endowed them, exulting, their limbs powdered with dust, mad with desire and thirsting to fight, the bulls bellow amidst the kine.

“Sharing his love, the noble she elephant, eager and affectionate, with a slow tread circles round the bull intoxicated with ichor and follows him in the woods.

“Bereft of their tail feathers, their marvellous natural adornment, wandering on the banks of the rivers, the peacocks, as if scorned by the cranes, move about forlornly, in flocks.

“With their formidable cries, the chief of the elephants strike terror in the ducks and geese standing in the pools covered with flowering lotuses and, having sprinkled themselves with water again and again, begin to drink.

“On the rivers, free of mud, with their sandy banks and peaceful ripples frequented by herds of kine, re-echoing to the cry of cranes, herons frolic joyously.

“The sound of the rivers, the clouds, the waterfalls, the winds, the cry of the peacocks and the croaking of frogs has



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ceased. Many coloured venomous serpents, greatly emaciated, deprived of food during the rains, tormented with hunger emerge from their holes where they have been confined so long.

“The evening, caressed by the rays of the trembling moon, casts aside her veil, revealing her roseate countenance with its stars, in an ecstasy of joy. The night, whose gentle face is the full moon, resembles a youthful woman, the clusters of stars her smile and charming mien; lit by the orb at its full it seems as if wrapped in a white mantle.

“Gorged with ripe grain, an enchanting flock of cranes joyfully crosses the sky in rapid flight, blown by the breeze like a garland of flowers tastefully interwoven.

“The waters of the great lake, with a solitary swan floating there asleep amidst countless waterlilies, resembles the heavens free from cloud, illumined by the full moon and a myriad stars. With their girdle of swans, their wreaths of blue and white lotus in flower, the great lakes are surpassingly beautiful and resemble lovely women decorated with jewels.

“At break of dawn, blending with the sound of the breeze blowing through the reeds, resembling the notes of a flute, the deep roarings in the caverns, increased by the wind and the bellowing of bulls, seem to answer one another.

“The river banks adorned with flowering grasses, stirred by a gentle breeze, resemble bright linen cloths from which the stains have been washed away.

“Bumble bees, roaming at will in the forest, gorged with nectar, heavy with the pollen of lotuses, where they have rested, in an excess of joy accompanied by their loved ones, follow the God of the Wind, in the woods.

“The calm waters, the flowering grasses, the cry of curlews, the ripened paddy fields, the gentle breeze, the immaculate moon, are all celebrating the departure of the rainy season.

“To-day the rivers, wearing their silver fish as girdles, flow by slowly, like lovely women, moving languidly, having passed the night in love.

“With the geese, aquatic plants<sup>1</sup> and the reeds that cover them like woven shawls, the rivers, sparkling, resemble the faces of women.

<sup>1</sup> Aquatic plants, literally Shaivala—*Vallisneria Octandra* or *Blyza*.

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“ In the forest, adorned with arches of blossom and full of the joyous humming of bees, the God of Love, to-day, impatiently wields his fiery bow.

“ Having saturated the earth with their profuse showers and filled the lakes and rivers, preparing the soil for the harvest, the clouds have disappeared from the sky.

“ Little by little, the rivers in autumn uncover their banks, like chaste brides disclosing their charms.

“ O My Friend, the waters having subsided, the rivers re-echo to the cry of ospreys and flocks of geese abound in the ponds.

“ It is the time, O Beloved Prince, when kings declare war on each other and thirsty for conquest enter upon their campaigns. The inception of hostilities for monarchs has begun, O Prince, and I do not see Sugriva making ready for an expedition of this kind.

“ Asana, Saptaparna, Kovidara trees are in full flower as also the Bandhujiva plant and the Tamala trees on the mountain slopes.

“ O Lakshmana! Behold the sandy banks of the rivers abound in swans, cranes, geese and osprey that are seen on every side. The four months of rain that have passed seemed to me like a hundred years, so filled with grief was I on account of Sita's absence.

“ Like the Chakravaka bird with its mate, she followed me in the forest and the dreadful loneliness of the Dandaka solitudes seemed to that youthful woman a garden of delight. Though far from my beloved, overcome with sorrow, bereft of my kingdom and an exile, yet Sugriva shows no pity for me, O Lakshmana !

“ ‘ He is without support, deprived of his kingdom, affronted by Ravana, unhappy, exiled, that amorous prince has taken refuge with me.’ Thus will Sugriva speak, O My Friend, and in his perversity, he, the King of the Monkeys, holds me in contempt, I, the Scourge of My Foes. Having fixed a time to set out in search of Sita and entered into a formal contract to do so, this false one, having obtained his ends, has forgotten his pledge.

“ Do thou enter Kishkindha and in my name, address that Bull of the Monkeys, the wretched Sugriva, the slave of domestic bliss, saying :—‘ He who, having raised the hopes of those who have sought his help in adversity and who formerly rendered

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him a service, fails to fulfil his promise to them, is considered the least of men in this world but that valiant one, who for good or evil loyally honours his given word, he is the best of men.

“ ‘ Even the carnivorous beasts refuse to feed on the flesh of those ungrateful beings, who, having obtained their end, do not assist their friends to do so in their turn.

“ ‘ Assuredly thou desirest to behold the gleam of my gold backed bow, resembling a series of lightning flashes, stretched ready for combat. Then shalt thou hear the dread twanging of my bowstring like unto the clash of thunder, when in wrath, I range the field of battle.’

“ Having brought my renowned valour to his remembrance, O Illustrious Prince, thou, who art my companion, it would be strange if he did not pause and reflect. O Thou Conqueror of Hostile Cities, since he, the King of the Plavagas, has gained his desire, he no longer recollects the time chosen, and the King of the Monkeys, wholly given over to pleasure, does not appear to be aware that four months have passed. Drinking and roystering with his ministers and his court, Sugriva does not trouble himself about us, who are filled with anxiety.

“ Go and address him, O Valiant Hero, inform him of our displeasure and speak to him in those terms, which are inspired by my wrath, saying :—‘ The Gate of Death, through which Bali passed, is not closed ! O Sugriva, honour thy pledge, for fear that thou mayest follow in the path taken by him ! ’ Thy brother died alone, struck down by mine arrow but if thou failest in faith, I shall destroy thee together with thine whole House.’

“ O Greatest of Men, say all that will further our desire, we must not delay, O Prince. Say to him ‘ Honour the promise thou didst make to me, O King of the Monkeys, recollect that virtue is eternal or, losing thy life this day, thou shalt fall into the jaws of death, where my shafts shall despatch thee to seek out Bali ! ’ ”

Seeing his elder brother, who was afflicted in his great misfortune, in the throes of violent anger, Lakshmana, burning with courage, the promoter of the glory of Manu’s Race, profoundly distressed, felt a deep resentment towards the King of the Monkeys.

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### CHAPTER 3 I

#### *Lakshmana goes to Kishkindha*

THE offspring of that Indra among Men, the son of a king, then spoke to his elder brother, who, full of tenderness, cheerless, despite his natural gaiety and full of distress, had but now expressed his desire to him :—

“Nay, that monkey is not a civilized being ; he does not consider the immediate consequences of his acts nor will he enjoy the glory of the monkey realm ; it is not fitting he should take advantage of circumstances in this wise. In his stupidity, he has become the slave of domestic bliss without calling to mind the debt he owes to thee ; let him therefore die and seek out Bali ; the throne should not be conferred on one devoid of virtue. I am unable to contain my violent rage ; I shall slay that disloyal Sugriva immediately. That son of Bali with the leaders of the monkeys shall this day assist us to recover the princess.”

Then Rama, the Destroyer of Warriors, in terms that were prudent and appropriate, addressed Lakshmana, who bow in hand desired to follow up his words with action and who full of ire was burning to fight :—

“Nay, thine equals in this world do not commit such an outrage,<sup>1</sup> the warrior who nobly masters his anger, is the greatest of heroes. Do not belie thy natural integrity, O Lakshmana ! Recollect the feelings of joy that the alliance with Sugriva formerly aroused in thee. Speak to him in moderate tones, omitting all harsh expressions, regarding his delay and his tardiness.”

Thus counselled by his elder brother, that Lion among Men, the valiant Lakshmana, the Slayer of Hostile Warriors, entered the town of Kishkindha. The sage and virtuous Lakshmana, eager to carry out what was agreeable to his brother, filled with indignation, entered the abode of that monkey, bearing in his

<sup>1</sup> That is slay a friend.

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hand his bow, resembling Indra's, high as the peak of a mountain, like unto Mt. Mandara.

Faithful to the behest of Rama, his younger brother, the equal of Brihaspati, reflected in himself how he should address and answer Sugriva and, filled with ire on account of his brother's anguish and displeasure, Lakshmana advanced like a loosened tempest, uprooting Sala, Tala, Ashwakarna and other trees in his impetuous strides, like a great elephant shattering the mountains and crushing the rocks under his feet, thus cutting short he distance to his goal.

That Tiger among the Ikshvakus then beheld the splendid city of the King of Monkeys, the inaccessible Kishkindha, hollowed out of the mountain and filled with warriors. His lips trembling in his fury against Sugriva, Lakshmana beheld those formidable looking monkeys ranging round the city and seeing that foremost of men, those monkeys resembling elephants, tore up parts of the mountain, rocks, boulders and great trees. Lakshmana, observing them seizing hold of these missiles, felt his anger redoubled, like a brazier lit with innumerable brands, and they, beholding that infuriated warrior, who resembled the God of Death himself at the dissolution of the worlds, fled in their hundreds on all sides.

At that, those Foremost of Monkeys, returning to Sugriva's palace, informed him of Lakshmana's approach and of his anger, but that King of the Monkeys who was passing his time in dalliance with Tara paid no heed to what those Lions among Monkeys were saying.

Thereupon, under the orders of the ministers, those monkeys, their hair standing on end, large as mountains or elephants or clouds, issued out of the city and terrible to behold with their nails and teeth, their jaws like tigers, stationed themselves in the open. Many had the strength of ten elephants, others were ten times as strong and some were endowed with the strength of a thousand elephants.

Lakshmana, who was enraged, recognized that Kishkindha, filled with these monkeys, who were armed with trunks of trees and endowed with great valour, was difficult of access. And emerging from the walls and ditches, these monkeys stood courageously in the open field.

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In the face of Sugriva's debauched indifference and the provocative attitude of the monkeys, the valiant Lakshmana, guardian of the interests of his elder brother, was seized with fresh anger, and that lion among men, heaving deep and burning sighs, his glances flashing with fury, resembled a brazier belching forth smoke.

With his pointed darts as the flickering tongue, his military ardour the poison, his bow the coils, he resembled a five-headed snake or the blazing fire at the end of the world or the enraged serpent king.

Then Angada, who had gone out to meet him, in his terror, suffered extreme discomfiture and that illustrious warrior Lakshmana, his eyes red with anger, commanded him saying :—  
“ O Child, inform Sugriva of my advent and tell him that the younger brother of Rama has come. O Conqueror of thy Foes, tormented by his brother's grief, Lakshmana waits at thy gate. Do thou seek to prepare that monkey by addressing him in this wise and return with all speed to inform me of his answer, O Dear Child.”

Hearing these words spoken by Lakshmana, Angada, filled with distress, went to seek out his uncle, who now occupied his father's place and said to him : “ Saumitri is come ! ”

Then Angada, overwhelmed by the harsh accents of that hero, his countenance bearing the traces of profound distress, went away, first offering obeisance to the feet of the king in great reverence and thereafter to those of Ruma.

That valiant prince, having touched the feet of his father, then made obeisance to his mother also and finally pressed the feet of Ruma having informed Sugriva of what had taken place.

Sugriva, heavy with sleep and fatigue, did not wake up but lay in a drunken stupor, sexual indulgence having dulled his reason.

Meantime, seeing Lakshmana, fear troubling their hearts, the monkeys welcomed him with shouts to appease his wrath. Beholding him near at hand, they raised a great clamour, resembling a huge wave or the growl of thunder or the roaring of lions; and this great tumult roused that red-eyed monkey adorned with garlands who was bemused with liquor, his mind bewildered.

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Recognizing his voice, two ministers of that king of the monkeys, accompanied by Angada, approached him. Both were of noble and venerable appearance and were named Yaksha and Prabhava. Ingratiating themselves by their speech that went straight to the point and sitting down near the king, who resembled Indra, the Lord of the Maruts, they said to him :—

“ There are two brothers, full of nobility and power, Rama and Lakshmana, who in human form are worthy of the kingdom they confer on others. One of them, bow in hand, stands at the door ; beholding him, the monkeys, terrified, are raising a great clamour. This brother of Raghava, Lakshmana, his spokesman, charged by him to communicate his wishes, has come at Rama’s command and the son of Tara, the beloved Angada, has been sent to thee in all haste by Lakshmana, O King, as his deputy, O Irreproachable Prince.

“ That valiant warrior Lakshmana stands at the door, his eyes inflamed with anger and consumes the monkeys with his glances, O King. Go quickly and place thy head at his feet with all those who belong to thee, O Great Monarch, so that his anger may be instantly appeased.

“ That which the virtuous Rama desires, do thou carry out scrupulously so that his wrath be softened ; execute his wishes with care, O King, fulfil thy pledge and be true to thy word ! ”

### CHAPTER 32

#### *Hanuman’s Speech*

AT these words of Angada and his ministers, Sugriva, learning of Lakshmana’s anger, rose from his seat and came to himself.

Having considered the different aspects of the matter, he addressed his counsellors, who were versed in the sacred formulas, with which he too was conversant and of which he was a strict observer, saying :—

“ I have neither spoken nor acted wrongfully; why is the brother of Raghava, Lakshmana, incensed against me, I ask

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myself? Evilly disposed persons, enemies ever looking for an occasion to charge me with imaginary crimes, have set the younger brother of Raghava against me. It behoves ye all to reflect on the matter wisely in order to discover the cause of his anger. Assuredly I do not fear Lakshmana any more than Raghava, but a friend who becomes angry without reason invariably creates anxiety. It is easy to contract a friendship, but extremely difficult to sustain it, for owing to the fickleness of the mind a friendship can be broken for the most trivial reason. Because of this, I am apprehensive in regards to the magnanimous Rama, for I have not been able to render back a proportionate service to him for that which he has done for me."

Sugriva having spoken, Hanuman, that foremost of monkeys, answered according to his understanding, saying :—

"It is in no way surprising, O Chief of the Monkey Tribes, that thou art unable to forget the significant and unexpected service rendered to thee by Rama. Assuredly that hero, for thy well-being, fearlessly slew Bali, equal to Indra in power. Undoubtedly Rama's feelings have been wounded, which is evidenced by his sending his brother Lakshmana, the increaser of his happiness, as his deputy, to thee. O Thou, the most skilled in discerning the seasons, autumn is here in all her glory, the Saptachada and Shyama trees being in full flower, but thou, given up to pleasure, doth not perceive it. The sky, free from cloud, is filled with brilliant stars and planets, and on all the regions, lakes and rivers, calm prevails.

"The time has come to inaugurate the search for Sita of which thou art conversant, O Bull among Monkeys. Finding thee forgetful, Lakshmana has come to inform thee that the hour is at hand. Grieving over the abduction of his spouse, the magnanimous Rama will speak harshly to thee through the lips of this hero; is it a cause for wonder? Having acted improperly towards him, I see no other means tending to thy welfare but to offer obeisance to Lakshmana and crave his pardon.

"It is the duty of counsellors to utter what is true freely to a king and it is for this that after mature reflection I have spoken thus.



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“ Armed with his bow, Rama, in his wrath, is able to subdue the whole world as also the Gods, the Asuras and the Gandharvas. It is unwise to provoke one of whom subsequently forgiveness must be craved, the more so, when the recollection of a favour received places one under the obligation of gratitude. Therefore incline thine head before this man with thy son and thine entourage, O King, and remain faithful to thy promise, as a woman to her husband’s will. It is ill-advised of thee to oppose Rama’s behests, even in thought, for thou art well aware of this man’s power. whose prowess is equal to Indra and the Gods.”

### CHAPTER 33

#### *Tara pacifies Lakshmana*

AT Angada’s request, and in accord with Rama’s command, Lakshmana, the slayer of hostile warriors, entered the beautiful city of Kishkindha situated amidst caves.

Seeing Lakshmana approaching, the highly powerful monkeys of immense size guarding the gate, stood with joined palms and beholding the son of Dasaratha filled with wrath, breathing heavily, dared not obstruct his entry.

Then that mighty warrior, gazing about him, beheld that great city decorated with jewels and flowery gardens and rendered magnificent by heaps of precious stones with which it was filled ; abounding in spacious buildings and temples, with jewels of every kind in abundance offered as merchandise, it was embellished by flowering trees covered with every desirable fruit.

Born of the Gods and Gandharvas, monkeys, able to change their form at will, wearing celestial garlands and raiment, added to the beauty of the city by their charming appearance.

Fragrant with the scent of sandalwood, aloes and lotus, the broad highways were also filled with the intoxicating odour of Maireya and Madhu<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Wines made from honey.

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Lakshmana beheld great mansions also, as high as the Vindhya and Meru mountains, and streams of pure water flowing through the city. He surveyed the enchanting abodes of Angada, Mainda, Dvidida, Gavaya, Gavaksha, Gaja, Sharabha, Vidhumati, Sampati, Suryaksha, Hanuman, Virabahu, Subahu and the great souled Nala, Kumuda, Sushena, Tara, Jambavan, Dadhibaktra, Nila, Sunetra and Supatala, dwellings like unto white clouds adorned with fragrant garlands and filled with jewels, grain and lovely women.

The magnificent and inaccessible abode of the King of Monkeys, like the palace of Mahendra, stood on a white rock and was decorated with pinnacled domes resembling the peaks of Mt. Kailasha. Trees in full flower, bearing fruits of every kind of delicious flavour, had been planted there and resembled blue clouds, enchanting with their cool shade, celestial blooms and golden-hued fruit.

Valiant monkeys, bearing weapons in their hands, guarded the resplendent gateway, the arches of which were of fine gold adorned with magnificent garlands.

The mighty Lakshmana entered Sugriva's palace without hindrance as the sun enters a great cloud, and having traversed the seven courtyards, filled with conveyances and seats, he beheld the inner apartments of that Chief of the Monkeys abounding in gold and silver couches with rich coverlets and fine seats.

On entering there, he heard sweet music blending with the rhythmic cadence of singing to the accompaniment of stringed instruments; and in the private apartments of Sugriva, many a high-born woman, distinguished for her youth and beauty, sumptuously attired, crowned with flowers and engaged in weaving garlands was observed by the high-souled Lakshmana. He noted too, that there were none of the king's attendants, who were not richly apparelled, happy, well fed and eager to offer their services.

Hearing the sound of the women's anklets and girdles, the virtuous Lakshmana became confused and incensed by the tinkling of those ornaments; and that hero stretched the cord of his bow so that the twanging resounded on all sides. Thereafter the valiant Lakshmana, indignant on Rama's account, withdrew into a corner and stood silent, reflecting on his

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presumption in entering Sugriva's private apartments. Hearing the twanging of the bow, Sugriva, the King of the Monkeys, recognizing the presence of Lakshmana, began to tremble on his splendid throne.

He reflected : ' As Angada previously informed me, Saumitri, through brotherly solicitude, has undoubtedly come hither.'

Then that monkey, informed by Angada, his tidings now made doubly sure by the sound of the bow, understood that Lakshmana had come and he grew pale, his heart being filled with apprehension, and Sugriva, the King of the Monkeys, addressed Tara, of charming appearance, in well considered words saying:—

" O Lady of Lovely Eyebrows, what cause for displeasure has the younger brother of Rama, who is gentle by nature ? Why has he come hither like a raving madman ? Dost thou know the reason of this prince's anger ? Assuredly that lion among men cannot be enraged without cause. If we have unwittingly displeased him, then considering the matter carefully, inform me without delay or go thyself to him.

" O Lovely One, by thy sweet speech seek to conciliate him. Seeing thee, his mind will become tranquil and his anger be allayed, for great warriors do not permit themselves to treat women with harshness. When thy gentle words have soothed him and his mind and senses are under control, then I, in my turn, will approach that prince, whose eyes are as large as lotus petals and who is the conqueror of his foes."

On this, Tara, swaying slightly, her eyes bright from the drinking of wine, her girdle loosened, hanging by a golden thread, wearing the insignia of royalty, with downcast looks approached Lakshmana. And when that great warrior beheld the consort of the King of the Monkeys, he, restraining his wrath in the presence of a woman, bowed his head, conducting himself like an ascetic.

Under the influence of wine and observing the benign attitude of that Prince, Tara, discarding all diffidence, addressed him in a conciliatory manner, in words calculated to gain his confidence and said :—

" From whence springs this anger, O Son of a King ? Who has failed to carry out thine orders ? What reckless person has

approached the forest where the trees are dry with a flaming torch ? ”

Mollified by this soft speech, Lakshmana replied with studied courtesy :—

“ Why, given over to lust, does thy consort neglect his duty and his own true interests ? And thou, who art devoted to him, why dost thou not give the matter thy consideration ? He has become indifferent to the affairs of the kingdom and of ourselves and our displeasure. Surrounded by parasites, O Tara, he gives himself up to sensual enjoyments.

“ The four months appointed as the term of waiting have passed, but the King of the Monkeys in an orgy of drunkenness and pleasure, is unaware of it. Assuredly dissipation is not a proper means to the observance of one’s duty and obligations. Intemperance brings in its train the loss of wealth, virtue and the capacity for enjoyment.

“ Not to requite a service received is to fail wholly in one’s duty and to lose a good friend is immensely injurious to one’s higher interests. From the point of view of prosperity, the greatest of virtues is friendship that is rooted in loyalty and justice ; he who fails in these is not fixed in his duty. This being so, what should therefore be done, O Thou, who art conversant with the path of duty ? ”

Hearing these just and reasonable words, expressed with gentleness, Tara assured the prince of the certain fulfilment of his enterprise and again addressed Lakshmana saying :—

“ O Son of a King, this is not the time for recrimination, thou shouldst restrain thine anger against my lord ; he has thine interests at heart, forgive his folly, O Warrior.

“ O Prince, how can a man endowed with every good quality be indignant with one who is lacking in them ? Which of thine equals, despite his good character, would give way to wrath ? I know the reason for the displeasure of Sugriva’s valiant ally, I am conversant with the service that you have both rendered us and which we must return. I know further, O Best of Men, that one must master one’s passions. I am aware in what company Sugriva has yielded to lust, which is the cause of the present procrastination that incites thy wrath. When man yields to desire he forgets time and place as also his duty and what should rightfully

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be done. Do thou pardon this Leader of the Monkey Race, who, at my side, without shame, gives himself up to sensual enjoyment to which he is the slave. Even the great Rishis, devoted to the practice of asceticism, when carried away by desire, lost control of their minds, how should this monkey, therefore, volatile by nature, when overcome by passion, not become a slave to pleasure, king though he be ? ”

Having addressed these words of profound understanding to Lakshmana, whose courage was immeasurable, the gentle Vanari, with a troubled look, on account of her conjugal affection, then added for the good of her lord :—

“ O Most Excellent of Men, though overcome by desire, Sugriva has long since made preparation to thine advantage. Already hundreds, thousands and millions of valiant monkeys, able to change their form at will, inhabiting every kind of tree, have come here.

“ Be pleased to enter, therefore, O Long-armed Warrior; the chaste conduct of a sincere friend authorizes him to look on the wives of others.”

At Tara's invitation and urged by a desire to carry out the commands that had been laid upon him, that illustrious hero, the conqueror of his foes, entered the inner apartment.

There, seated on a golden throne, covered with a rich cloth, he beheld Sugriva, resembling the sun itself, his person decked with celestial ornaments, of a godlike beauty and dignity. Wearing superb raiment and wreaths he looked like Mahendra himself, on every side he was surrounded by women adorned with crowns and jewels meet for goddesses, and his reddened eyes gave him the appearance of Antaka.

Of the hue of fine gold, clasping Ruma firmly in his arms, seated on a magnificent throne, that large-eyed hero saw before him the mighty Saumitri of expansive eyes.

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### CHAPTER 34

#### *Lakshmana reproaches Sugriva*

SEEING that indomitable lion among men, Lakshmana, entering full of wrath, Sugriva was troubled and, observing that Son of Dasaratha breathing heavily and burning with indignation on account of the calamity that had overtaken his brother, the King of the Monkeys rose and, leaving his golden seat that resembled the highly decorated standard of Indra, his eyes inflamed, approached Prince Lakshmana and stood before him like the mighty Kalpa tree.<sup>1</sup> Thereupon the women, lead by Ruma, followed him, like a cluster of stars surrounding the moon.

Then Lakshmana, filled with ire, said to Sugriva standing amidst the women with Ruma at his side, like the moon surrounded by stars :—

“ That king who is endowed with great and noble qualities and is compassionate, who has subdued his senses and is grateful and loyal, obtains renown in the world, but the monarch who is rooted in unrighteousness and is unjust to his friends who have rendered him assistance, is the object of opprobrium.

“ To utter a falsehood with reference to a horse is to be guilty of the death of a hundred horses, in regard to a cow of a thousand cows, but to utter a falsehood in regard to a man is to destroy one’s self as well as one’s kindred.

“ That ungrateful wretch, who, having gained his end, does not render service for service, is guilty of the murder of all beings, O King of the Plavagas ; this is the text recited by Brahma on beholding one who was guilty of ingratitude ; it is known throughout the world, O Plavamgama. He who kills a cow or drinks intoxicating liquor or is a thief or violates his vow is still able to expiate his sin, but for him who is guilty of ingratitude, no expiation is possible.

“ Thou art an ignoble, false and ungrateful wretch, O Monkey, for having obtained what thou didst seek from Rama without requiting his services. Having achieved thy desire through

<sup>1</sup> Kalpa—The Wish-fulfilling tree.

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Rama, is it not thy duty to do everything in thy power to recover Sita ? Yielding thyself up to sensual delights, untrue to thy promise, Rama does not know thee for the serpent croaking like a frog, that thou art.<sup>1</sup>

“ In his compassion for thee, O Wicked Wretch, the magnanimous Rama enabled thee to regain the kingdom of the monkeys. Thou hast failed to acknowledge the benefits conferred on thee by the high-souled Raghava, therefore pierced by sharp arrows thou shalt follow Bali. The path thy brother took at death is not yet closed ! Honour thy promise, O Sugriva, do not follow in his wake. Since thou dost not behold the Prince of the Ikshwakus loosing his fiery shafts, thou art still able to remain serene and happy, without concerning thyself about his anxieties.”

### CHAPTER 35

#### *Tara defends Sugriva*

THUS spoke Lakshmana, the son of Sumitra, inflamed with anger and Tara, whose face was as fair as the moon, answered him saying :—

“ O Lakshmana, the King of the Monkeys has not merited this harsh language, particularly from thy lips. Sugriva is not ungrateful nor false nor worthy of condemnation nor, O Hero, does he utter what is not true nor is he an impostor !

“ The valiant monkey, Sugriva, has not forgotten the assistance rendered to him by Rama on the field of battle, which no other was able to give. With the aid of the magnanimous Rama, Sugriva has regained his glory and the lasting dominion of the monkey realm and has been restored to Ruma and myself once again, O Scourge of thy Foes !

“ Having been subject to cruel adversity and now enjoying the summit of good fortune, he has become insensible to the arrival of the time for the fulfilment of his promise, as was the Sage Vishwamitra of old. For ten years, that virtuous Sage was

<sup>1</sup> The meaning being “ croaking like a frog to attracts frogs.”

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attached to the nymph Ghritachi and failed to perceive that time was passing, he, who was skilled in discerning time.<sup>1</sup>

“ Sugriva had been deprived of physical pleasures over a long period, he was exhausted and had not experienced any relaxation, O Lakshmana, therefore Rama should pardon him. And thou, O Lakshmana, shouldst not give way to wrath like an inferior person without ascertaining what has taken place. Virtuous people like thee, O Lion among Men, do not give way to immediate and unreasoning anger. In all humility, I appeal to thee on behalf of Sugriva to control the grief that gives rise to this anger in thee. It is my firm conviction that Sugriva is ready to renounce Ruma, Angada, myself, kingdom, wealth, grain and herds to please Rama. Having slain that vile demon, Sugriva will restore Sita to Rama, as the moon is re-united with Rohini.

“ In Lanka there are hundreds, thousands and millions of irrepressible demons able to change their shape at will ; without destroying these formidable beings, it is impossible to overcome Ravana, by whom Maithili has been borne away. Sugriva is unable to defeat those demons of terrible exploits without the support of auxiliaries, O Lakshmana. This was Bali’s considered opinion, that resourceful and experienced monarch of the monkeys. Knowing nought of the matter, I heard it from his lips.

“ In order to render thee assistance, the foremost of the monkeys have been summoned for this enterprise with innumerable carefully selected troops. Awaiting those valiant and powerful monkeys, chosen to assure the success of Rama’s undertaking, the King of the Monkeys has not yet left the city.

“ O Lakshmana, some time ago Sugriva, wisely ordered that these monkeys should come together this very day. Thousands and millions of bears and hundreds of Golangulas<sup>2</sup> as well as innumerable kotis<sup>3</sup> of monkeys, burning with energy, will be at thy disposal to-day.

“ Therefore O Conqueror of Thy Foes, subdue thy wrath. Seeing thy face distorted with anger and thine eyes inflamed,

<sup>1</sup> This story is told in Balakanda.

<sup>2</sup> Golangula—a black monkey with the tail of a cow.

<sup>3</sup> Koti—a crore or ten millions.



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the wives of these foremost of monkeys, far from being reassured, are suffering all the anguish of their former fear."

### CHAPTER 36

#### *Lakshmana is reconciled to Sugriva*

BY nature gentle, Lakshmana listened to those just and gracious words of Tara with deference.

Perceiving the magnanimous acceptance of her speech, the King of the Monkeys threw off his fear as one discards wet clothing. Thereafter Sugriva tore off the gaudy and variegated garland from his neck and threw it away, his intoxication being dissipated and that Chief of the Monkeys addressed the redoubtable warrior Lakshmana with humility, thus gratifying him, and said :—

" O Saumitri, I had lost my fortune, my fame and the kingdom of the monkeys which by Rama's favour have been wholly restored to me. Who is able to equal this or render it back even in part to that divine Rama, renowned for his exploits, O Prince? The virtuous Raghava will recover Sita and slay Ravana by his own valour alone ; as for me, I shall merely accompany him. What need of assistance has he who, with a single arrow pierced seven giant trees and a mountain, penetrating deep into the earth ? He by the sound of whose stretching bow the earth with its mountains quakes, what need has he for aid ? I shall follow that Indra among Men, O Lakshmana, when he goes forth to destroy his adversary, Ravana, together with his House.

" If I have betrayed his friendship or confidence in some measure, may he pardon me ; is there any without fault ? "

These words of the magnanimous Sugriva pleased Lakshmana who addressed him affectionately, saying :—

" Assuredly my brother will not lack support, O Prince of the Monkeys, above all, O Sugriva, with thy co-operation, who art full of humility. Such is thy valour and sincerity, that thou art worthy of enjoying the unequalled prosperity of the monkey realm.

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“With thine aid, undoubtedly, O Sugriva, the illustrious Rama will soon slay his enemies in battle. Virtuous, mindful of what should be done, intrepid in the field, thou utterest noble words that are worthy of thee, O Friend. Who else, recognizing his fault, at the height of his power, would speak thus, O Bull among the Monkeys, save mine elder brother and thee ?

“Thou art equal to Rama in courage and strength ! Thou has been ordained his ally by the Gods, O Chief of the Monkeys. Why delay further, O Hero, let us go forth together and offer consolation to thy friend, who is afflicted on account of separation from his consort.

“O Sugriva, forgive those reproaches that I addressed to thee on account of Rama’s profound distress.”

### CHAPTER 37

#### *Sugriva assembles his Troops*

HEARING the words of the magnanimous Lakshmana, Sugriva said to Hanuman who stood near :—

“Call together all those who inhabit the heights of the Mahendra, Himavat, Vindhya, Kailasha and Mandara mountains, as also those from the peaks of Mt. Pandu and the Five Hills ; those who dwell on the mountains that are bright as the dawn ; those who inhabit the furthest shores of the sea in the western region and those on the mountains in the mansions of the sun ; those formidable monkeys who have taken refuge in the Padmachalu woods ; those monkeys resembling clouds of collyrium, who possess the strength of the lord of elephants, who dwell on the Anjana hill ; those possessing the splendour of gold, inhabiting the caves of the Mahashaila mountains and those who frequent the slopes of Mt. Meru, as well as those dwelling on Mt. Dhumra ; those who possess the brilliance of the rising sun, of immense bounds, who, on the Mt. Maharuna, drink the heady wine Maireya ; those who dwell in the vast, fair and fragrant forests with their charming glades, where the ascetics’ hermitages are found. With the aid of the fleetest of monkeys summon

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them all from every quarter of the world by means of gifts and conciliation, Already I have sent out messengers who are famed for their agility, yet, in order to expedite matters further, let them be followed by other emissaries.

“Bring those leaders of monkeys also, who are lazy or given over to pleasure. If they have not responded to my appeal in ten days, they will suffer the death penalty for infringing the royal command. Let those lions among monkeys under my dominion carry out my orders with all speed in their hundreds, thousands and millions.

“Resembling mountains of mist shrouding the heavens, let those excellent monkeys of terrifying aspect come at my call. Let all the monkeys who are acquainted with the way, scour the earth ; call them together at my command with all speed.”

At the words of the Monkey King, the Son of the Wind dispatched groups of intelligent monkeys to every quarter. Setting out to that region traversed by Vishnu, by the paths frequented by birds and stars, the monkeys, under the commands of their sovereign set forth immediately.

Scouring the seas, mountains, forests and lakes, they called all the different monkeys together to help Rama. When these monkeys heard of Sugriva's order, a very death warrant, they, in fear, at once set out for Kishkindha.

Those of the Plavagama Tribe, who were as black as collyrium, filled with energy, came from the Mt. Anjana to the number of three kotis to join Rama. Those who frolicked on the high hills, where the sun sets, shining like gold, offered themselves in ten kotis. From the heights of Mt. Kailasha, monkeys whose colour resembled a lion's mane, came to the number of a thousand and those who lived on fruit and roots, who dwelt on Himavat came in tens of millions, whilst those terrible apes of fearful deeds, resembling burning coals, descended in haste from the Vindhya mountain in thousands of millions. Those who dwelt on the shores of the white sea, the dwellers of the Tamala forests and those who fed on coconuts could not be numbered.

From woods, caves and rivers, a vast army of monkeys issued forth, who seemed able to drink up the sun's rays. Now those mighty monkeys, who had gone out in all haste to spur others on,

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found a great tree growing on the summit of Mt. Himavat. In ancient times on that divine and sacred peak, a great sacrifice had been performed which found favour with Mahadeva, who satisfies all the desires of the Gods. Thereafter many varieties of fruit and roots resembling ambrosia had sprung up in that quarter from the sacred offerings of grain and seed,<sup>1</sup> and those who partook of them had no need of further sustenance for the period of a whole month.

Then those foremost among the monkeys gathered those celestial fruits and roots with medicinal herbs from that place of sacrifice and they brought fragrant flowers also to please Sugriva.

Having called all the monkeys of the world together, those chosen messengers returned with speed at the head of their troops and soon those fleet and spirited monkeys had returned to Kishkindha, where Sugriva was ; and they presented him with the fruit, herbs and roots that they had gathered, saying :—

“ We have scoured the mountains, rivers and forests ; all the monkeys of the earth have come at thy call.”

These words pleased Sugriva, the King of the Monkey Tribe, who freely accepted all the gifts they had brought.

## CHAPTER 38

### *Sugriva goes to meet Rama*

SUGRIVA, having accepted the gifts presented to him, thanked the monkeys and dismissed them all.

Having sent away those thousands of monkeys, who had performed their task, he deemed his mission, as that of the mighty Raghava, well nigh accomplished.

Thereupon Lakshmana addressed the redoubtable Sugriva, the foremost of monkeys, with a deference which moved him, saying :—“ O Friend, be pleased to set out from Kishkindha.”

<sup>1</sup> That had been scattered there.

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Hearing these words spoken by Shri Lakshmana, Sugriva filled with joy answered :—" Be it so, let us go forward, I am at thy command."

Having thus spoken to the illustrious Lakshmana, Sugriva dismissed Tara with the other women and thereafter summoning the leaders of the monkeys in a loud voice addressed them, saying :—" Come hither ! "

At the sound of his voice all those admitted to the presence of women came immediately and stood with joined palms before the king, whose brilliance equalled the sun's and who said to them :—

" Go with all speed and bring a litter, O Monkeys ! " At this command they set out with rapid strides to seek that marvellous litter and, when it was made ready, the supreme Sovereign of the Monkeys said to Saumitri :—" Be pleased to ascend the litter. O Lakshmana ! "

Speaking thus, Sugriva with Lakshmana mounted the golden litter that shone like the sun and was supported by a large number of monkeys. A white canopy was spread over Sugriva's head and magnificent fans made of yaks tails were waved about him. Eulogized by bards, to the sound of conches and trumpets, he set out in regal state. Surrounded by hundreds of war-like monkeys bearing weapons in their hands he proceeded to the place where Rama dwelt and, having arrived at that excellent spot, that illustrious prince descended from the litter with Lakshmana and approached Rama with joined palms. Then the monkeys, grouped about him, did likewise and, seeing that great army of monkeys resembling a lake covered with lotus buds, Rama was well pleased with Sugriva.

Raising the King of the Monkeys, who had prostrated himself before him and whose forehead touched his feet, the virtuous Rama embraced him to demonstrate his affection and esteem and requested him to be seated. Thereafter seeing him seated on the ground, Rama said :—

" He who divides his time judiciously between duty, pleasure and the legitimate acquisition of wealth and honours his responsibilities in these things is truly a king, O Best of Monkeys ; but he who neglects his duty, his true interests and legitimate pleasures is like one who sleeps on the top of a tree and does not

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wake up till he has fallen. The monarch who is ever ready to destroy his foes and delights in showing favour to his friends, who plucks the fruit of the threefold food,<sup>1</sup> has fulfilled his duty.

“The time has now come to act, O Scourge of Thy Foes, therefore take counsel with thy ministers, O King of the Apes!”

Thus addressed, Sugriva answered Rama, saying:—“I had lost fame and fortune together with the entire monkey realm, O Long-armed Warrior but, through thy favour have received them again by thine and thy brother’s grace, O Great One, O Greatest of the Conquerors. He who does not acknowledge a service done to him is an object of contempt.

“These energetic leaders have gone out in their hundreds to summon all the monkeys in the world, O Slayer of thy Foes. Monkeys, bears and apes full of valour, of ferocious aspect, familiar with the woods and inaccessible forests, monkeys that are born of the Gods and Gandharvas, able to change their shape at will, are on their way followed by their troops, O Rama.

“These monkeys are proceeding here surrounded by hundreds and thousands,<sup>2</sup> by millions and tens of millions; these monkeys and their chiefs, who are as valiant as Mahendra and resemble mountains in stature, are coming together from the Meru and Vindhya ranges. They will unite with thee to fight the demon Ravana and, laying him low on the battlefield, will restore Sita to thee.”

Seeing the preparations made by that valiant monkey, in accord with his desire, the illustrious prince was delighted and his countenance resembled the blue lotus in flower.

<sup>1</sup> The three ends of life, duty, wealth and legitimate pleasures.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. Arvuda—a hundred millions.

Sanku—is a thousand Arvudas.

Madhya is an Arvuda ten times; Antya is a Madhya ten times; Samudra is a Madhya twenty times and a Paradha a Samudra thirty times.

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## CHAPTER 39

### *The Arrival of Sugriva's Forces*

THUS spoke Sugriva, standing with joined palms before Rama, and that most virtuous of men, taking him in his arms, embraced him saying :—" It is no wonder that Indra sends the rain, nor that the sun with its thousand rays dispels the darkness from the sky, O My dear One, nor that the moon by its brilliance makes the night clear, nor that thine equals create the happiness of their friends, O Scourge of Thy Foes. To find nobility of character in thee is not strange ; I know thee by the affectionate tenor of thy speech. With thy support, O My Friend, I shall vanquish all my foes on the battlefield ; thou art mine ally and shouldst assist me.

" To his own destruction, did that vile demon bear Maithili away, as Anuhlada<sup>1</sup> carried away Sachi, having first deceived her sire.<sup>2</sup> Ere long, I shall pierce Ravana with my sharp arrows as Shatakratu, that slayer of his enemies, slew the haughty father of Paulomi."

At that moment, darkness covered the firmament and veiled the fiery brilliance of that orb of a thousand rays ; a pall of dust hung over all regions, and the earth with its mountains, forests and woods trembled. The entire earth was covered with innumerable monkeys resembling kings of men and who, having sharp teeth, were gifted with great strength. In the twinkling of an eye, those foremost of monkeys surrounded by troops, numbering hundreds of kotis, endowed with extreme energy, roaring like thunder, gathered from the rivers, mountains and seas with others who inhabited the forests.

Monkeys the colour of the rising sun or white like the moon or of the tint of lotus stamens or pale, having their home on the golden mountain, appeared in tens of thousands in attendance on that renowned and valiant monkey Shatavali. Then the puissant

<sup>1</sup> Anuhlada—A son of Hiranya-kasipu, a Daitya, father of Prahlada. His story is to be found in the Puranas.

<sup>2</sup> Puloman—a Danava who was slain by Indra when he attempted to curse him for ravishing his daughter Sachi.

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sire of Tara, who resembled a golden hill, appeared at the head of many thousand kotis. Thereafter the father of Ruma, father-in-law of Sugriva, who resembled the filaments of a lotus and was like a youthful sun, arrived accompanied by other thousands of kotis of monkeys; and that foremost of monkeys, Kesharin, Hanuman's illustrious sire, appeared in company with many thousands of monkeys. And Gavaksha, King of the Golangulas, endowed with dreadful power came, surrounded by millions of monkeys; Dhumra also, the destroyer of his foes, advanced with two thousand bears endowed with terrific speed. Thereafter the leader of herds, Panasha of exceeding prowess came, accompanied by three million mighty and dreadful warriors and he was followed by Nila of immense stature, who resembled a mass of collyrium, with ten kotis of monkeys. And bright as a golden mountain, the heroic Gavaya arrived with five kotis of monkeys, and in his devotion to Sugriva the brave chief Darimukha brought a thousand kotis. Thereafter the two powerful Ashwiputras, Mainda and Dvidida presented themselves with a thousand million monkeys. The brave warrior Gaja conducted an army of three kotis of monkeys, and the illustrious king of the bears, called Jambavan, came at the head of ten kotis, placing himself under Sugriva's command. The renowned Rumana followed with a hundred kotis of intrepid monkeys in all haste. A hundred thousand million monkeys followed Gandhamadana, and an infinite number were under the command of Prince Angada, who, like his father, was full of courage. Thereafter, shining like a star, came Tara of supreme valour, accompanied by five kotis of monkeys from a great distance and there followed Indrajana, a brave and skilful general, who in his turn presented himself at the head of eleven kotis, and also Rambha with an ayuta<sup>1</sup> of soldiers; and there followed the monkey leader Durmukha, that valiant one full of phenomenal courage, with two kotis of monkeys, resembling the peaks of Mt. Kailasha. Hanuman himself was accompanied by thousands of monkeys and the supremely brave Nala was followed by the inhabitants of the woods to the number of an hundred, a thousand and an hundred monkeys. The fortunate Darimukha was escorted by ten kotis of monkeys and with loud shouts took his place beside

<sup>1</sup> Ayuta—Ten thousand, a myriad or a number not to be counted.



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Sugriva. And Sharabha, Kumuda, Vahni and Rambha came, those monkeys who were able to change their shape at will, with their forces of incalculable numbers covering the entire earth, its mountains and forests. All the monkeys inhabiting the earth gathered round Sugriva, leaping, gambolling and roaring, and those Plavagamas surrounded Sugriva like massed clouds round the sun. Full of courage and energy, they gave voice to repeated shouts of acclamation, bowing their heads in salutation to the King of Monkeys. Others, the leaders of armies, according to tradition, approached the king and stood by his side with joined palms; and Sugriva standing in extreme devotion before Rama, informed him of the arrival of the monkeys and then addressed his generals, who were burning with zeal, saying:—"O Chiefs of Monkeys, station your forces duly on the mountain near rills in the woods and let each ascertain the exact number of his troops."

### CHAPTER 40

#### *Sugriva sends his Monkeys to the East in search of Sita*

THEN the Lord of the Monkeys, his purpose accomplished, said to that lion among men, Rama, the destroyer of hostile hosts :—

"Here, gathered together, are the foremost of monkeys inhabiting my dominions, who are equal to Mahendra and are able to transport themselves anywhere at will. These ferocious monkeys, resembling giants and titans, of immeasurable prowess, renowned for their exploits, bellicose, valiant, indefatigable and supremely sagacious in all their deliberations, have come with their vast forces.

"O Rama, these untold millions, who inhabit various mountain tracts, traversing land and sea, have come to place themselves at thy service. All are intent on their master's welfare and obedient to thy behests; they are at thy command, it is for thee to dispose of them as thou wilt. Though I am fully conversant with thy design, yet do thou order all as thou judgest best."

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Thus spoke Sugriva and Rama, the son of Dasaratha, taking him in his arms, said to him :—

“ O Dear and Wise Friend, let us learn if Sita still lives or no and ascertain in what country Ravana dwells. Then, having come to where Videha's daughter is to be found, we will adopt those measures that circumstances dictate, the hour having been fixed.

“ O Lord of the Monkeys, it is not for me to command this expedition nor for Lakshmana; it is thou who must direct it; thou shalt be its leader. Do thou, O Lord, take the command thyself in this matter, thou art fully acquainted with my purpose, O Hero. Thou, the second of my friends,<sup>1</sup> art full of courage, wise, knowing how to choose the fitting moment, devoted to my true interests, supremely loyal and accomplished.”

Thus addressed, Sugriva, in the presence of Rama and the sagacious Lakshmana, said to his general, Vinata, who resembled a great hill and whose voice resounded like thunder :—

“ O Foremost of Leaders, who art accompanied by monkeys as bright as the sun and moon, thou art able to turn time and place to advantage and art skilled in conducting thine affairs ! Taking with thee hundreds and thousands of apes, explore the eastern region with its forests, woods and mountains, in search of Sita, the Princess of Videha and also Ravana's stronghold. Search among the mountain fastnesses, the forests and rivers for Rama's beloved consort, the daughter-in-law of King Dasaratha ; search by the beautiful Bhagirathi, the Sarayu, the Kaushiki and the Kalindi, the enchanting Yamuna and the great hills bordering the Saraswati, the Sindhu and the Shona of ruby waters, the Mahi and Kalamahi with their splendid wooded hills.

“ Look for them in the Brahmamalas, Videhas, Malavana, Kashikoshalas, and Magadhas, the Pundras and Angas, lands where the silkworm and silver mines abound and on the mountains and cities skirting the sea. Search through the houses in Mandara, amongst those people whose ears resemble cloths reaching to their nether lip, whose faces are black and dreadful, who are one-footed, though fleet withal, and whose bodies do not deteriorate ; those also who feed on human flesh, and the Kiratas, hunters who are golden-hued, of pleasing

<sup>1</sup> The first being Lakshmana.

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looks, possessing thick hair worn in a knot, who subsist on raw fish and those creatures, tiger-men, terrible to behold.

“O Dwellers in the woods, search carefully in all these places that are accessible by climbing and swimming and the Island of the Seven Kingdoms Yava, also and the islands Suvarna and Rupayaka, full of gold mines, called the gold and silver islands. Beyond these, is the mountain Shishira, whose peaks reach to the heavens, and which is inhabited by Gods and Giants. Seek here in the mountain fastnesses, cascades and forests for the glorious consort of Rama.

“Thereafter you will reach the red and swiftly flowing river Shona ; from there descend to the seashore, where the Siddhas and Charanas dwell. In these enchanting sacred spots, seek everywhere for Ravana and Sita. Explore the forests, mountain sprung rivers, wild tracts and cavernous heights. It behoves you to examine the terrible islands in the ocean, where great waves arise and, whipped by the tempest, let forth a thunderous roar. There dwell Asuras of immense size, who by Brahma’s permission, seize the shadows of birds flying over the sea. Arriving at that vast ocean, that resounds like clouds at the time of the dissolution of the universe, frequented by huge serpents, keep careful watch and crossing over that sea, called Lohita, whose red waters are terrible to behold, you will come upon the mighty knarled Shamali tree. There, constructed by Vishwakarma, like unto Mt. Kailasha, decorated with every kind of gem, towereth the abode of Garuda. Terrible demons resembling hills of diverse forms, named Mandechas, hang suspended from the rocks there. Day after day, at the rising of the sun, those demons tormented by that planet, fall into the water, struck by Brahma’s energy and then suspend themselves on the rocks once more.

“Proceeding further, you will come to the sea, named Kshiroda, that resembles a white cloud with its waves shining like a necklace of pearls. In its centre rises the great white mountain Rishabha, planted with trees, bearing fragrant blossoms and a lake named Sudarshana covered with dazzling silver lotuses having golden stamens, where flamingoes abound. Vibudhas, Charanas, Yakshas and Kinneras in the company of troops of Apsaras, disport themselves on the shore of that lake.

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“Leaving the Kshiroda Sea behind, O Warriors, you will come to the Jalada sea which is a source of terror to all beings. There the Rishi Aurva<sup>1</sup> created a shining object by the power of his anger, which was transformed into the head of a horse by Brahma. Its heat is unequalled and its food is the universe of movable and immovable beings. There the cries of the creatures of the sea, who are unable to bear the flames, can be heard wailing in its vicinity.

“To the north of the Svadu Sea rises the high mountain Jatarupashila, covering thirteen yojanas, of the splendour of gold. There, O Monkeys, you will behold the supporters of the earth, the serpent resembling the moon, with eyes as large as lotus petals, worshipped by the Gods, and possessing a thousand heads, the divine Ananta of dark hue sleeping on the summit of the mountain. There stands a golden palm tree with three branches resembling a standard set upon an altar. This is the boundary of the Eastern region set up by the Gods.

“Reaching up to the heavens, measuring a hundred yojanas, the mountain, Udaya, rises with its golden peak, beautiful with its Sala, Tamala and flowering Karnikara trees bright as the sun.

“There also is the peak Saumanasa four miles in breadth and forty in height. From there in former days, Vishnu, the supreme Lord, measured the earth with three strides, the second being Mt. Meru.

“The sun passing from Jambudwipa on the north and reaching the summit of Saumanasa, again becomes visible to the dwellers in Jambudwipa. It is there that the great Rishis, Vaikhanasas, bright as the sun, perform their austerities.

“This is the island Sudarshana, where the sun rises, giving light to all beings. Search for Janaki and Ravana on these mountain fastnesses and in the forests and woods. Here, when the sun shines on the Shaila mountain, the east appears roseate. Because the sun rises there, Brahma established it, in ancient times, as the gateway of the world, called the East.

<sup>1</sup> A miraculously born sage who castigated the warrior class, but on the persuasion of his ancestors, cast his anger into the sea, where it assumed the form of a being with a horse's head.

In other versions it was said to be the subterranean fire that consumes the world at the end of the cycle and is represented as a flame with a horse's head.

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Here you should look for Sita and Ravana on the mountain breast, in the caves and by the waterfalls.

“Beyond is the impassable eastern quarter inhabited by the Gods, bereft of sun and moon, covered by darkness. Search for the princess in all those rocks, woods and streams that I have made known to you, but, O Foremost of Monkeys, you are only able to proceed thus far. Beyond is the region without sun or bourne of which I have no knowledge. Proceeding in search of Vaidehi and Ravana’s abode, having reached the mountain Udaya, return, when a full month shall have passed. Do not exceed the period ; he who does so, will be punished by death.

“Having attained your end, and met with Maithili and with care explored the favourite region of Mahendra, which is covered with woods and thickets, return satisfied.”

### CHAPTER 41

*Sugriva sends out other Monkeys to explore the Southern Region*

THEN having sent away that mighty host of monkeys to the east, Sugriva dispatched another well tried army to the south.

Appointing Angada leader of those heroic monkeys, that hero, the lord of the monkey bands, conversant with the countries that had to be explored, sent out those endowed with speed and valour : Nila, the Son of Agni, and the monkey Hanuman, the exceedingly energetic Jambavan, Suhotra and Sharari, Sharagulma, Gaja, Gavaksha, Gavaya, Sushena, Vrishabha, Mainda, Dvidida, Gandhamadana, Ulkamukha and Ananga, the two sons of Hutashana.

And the King of the Monkeys began to describe those regions that were difficult of access to those simian chiefs, saying :—

“You will first behold the Vindhya ranges, possessing a hundred peaks covered with trees and shrubs of every kind, and the enchanting river, Narmada, frequented by mighty serpents, and the wide and charming stream, Godavari, with its dark reeds, and the captivating Krishnaveni ; the regions of Mekhalas and Utkala and the city of Dasharna also ; Abravanti and Avanti,

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Vidarbhas and Nishtikas and the charming Mahishakas. You will see too, the Matsyas, Kalingas and Kaushikas, where you should search for the princess and the Dandaka Forest with its mountains, rivers and caverns and the Godavari, also examine the districts of Andhras, Paundras, the Cholas, Pandyas and Keralas. Then repair to the Ayomukha Mountain, rich in ore, with its marvellous peaks and flowering woodlands; that mountain, possessing lovely forests of sandalwood, should be carefully searched by you.

"Thereafter you will behold that divine river of pure waters, the Kaveri, rendered gay by troupes of Apsaras. On the summit of the mighty Mountain Malaya, bright as the sun, you will behold Agastya, the foremost of Rishis. By the permission of that high-souled one, you will cross over the great river, Tamraparni, abounding in crocodiles. Ravishing forests of sandalwood cover the islands of these waters flowing to the sea, which resemble a youthful bride going to meet her lover.

"Proceeding further, O Monkeys, you will see the golden gates set with pearls of the city of the Pandyas; then in order to ensure the success of your enterprise, you will approach the sea and ascertain your ability for crossing it. In the centre of the ocean, Agastya has set that foremost of mountains, Mahendra, its slopes covered with trees. Entirely made of gold it extends deep down into the waters; the abode of Gods, Rishis, Yakshas and Apsaras, thronged by innumerable Siddhas and Charanas and of surpassing loveliness, it is visited by the thousand-eyed God at each new moon.

"On the other side of the sea is an island, four hundred miles in length, inaccessible to men and splendid to look upon; search there with particular care, it is the abode of the wicked Ravana, who merits death, the Lord of the Titans, in splendour equal to Indra himself.

"In the middle of the ocean dwells the female titan named Angaraka, who procures her prey by seizing the shadow of those who fly in the air. Your doubts at rest, search there for the consort of that king of men whose glory is limitless.

"Beyond that island in the sea there rises a lovely hill on which Celestial Beings dwell, named Pushpitaka, bright as the rays of sun or moon, lapped by the waves of the ocean, whose peaks

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seem to pierce the heavens. Of these, one all golden, on which the day's orb lingers, the ungrateful and the unbeliever may not behold. Inclining your heads to that peak, offer salutations and search on. After this you will come to another mountain, difficult of access, named Suryavan extending over fourteen yojanas and, beyond this, the mountain Vaidyuta, ever green, with trees bearing every desirable fruit in all seasons. Partaking of these delectable fruit and roots and drinking the honey, pass on, O Monkeys.

"Beyond there is the Mountain Kunjara which delights the eye and heart, where Vishwakarma constructed the abode of Agastya. Extending over four miles, this stately golden edifice adorned with many kinds of gems rises to the height of ten yojanas. There also is the city of Bhogavati, the abode of the Serpent Race, with spacious streets, incapable of being captured, guarded by formidable snakes and sharp-toothed highly-poisonous serpents, where the dread King of the Serpents, Vasuki, dwells. Search that city with care in every hidden place wheresoever it may be.

"Going beyond, you will find the beautiful Rishabha Mountain in the form of a bull, filled with gems where excellent Goshiraka, Padmaka, and Harishyama trees and those possessing the brilliance of fire are seen. Approaching the sandalwood forest by no means should you enter there, for a certain Gandharva, named Rohita, protects it with five other Celestial Beings resplendent as the sun, named Shailusha, Gramani, Shiksha, Shuka and Rabhru.

"Thereafter you will see the retreat of those ascetics, whose splendour resembles the sun, moon and fire ; this is the end of the earth where those who have won the heavenly regions, dwell. Beyond is the dread abode of the Pitris, which is inaccessible. There Death has his city, enveloped in abysmal gloom, O Bulls among Monkeys. Pursue your explorations thus far ; but those who go beyond never return.

"Having searched all those regions which are accessible to you, seeking for some trace of the princess, he who shall return within a month saying ' I have seen Sita ' will pass his days in happiness, enjoying prosperity equal to mine, in the midst of every delight. None will be dearer to me ; I shall cherish him

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as a relative and, however great the number of his faults, he will become my friend.

“Your strength and vigour are immeasurable and you are born in families endowed with great qualities; strive manfully therefore to find the princess; set forth on this mission of supreme importance and demonstrate your heroism.”

### CHAPTER 42

#### *Other Monkeys are sent to explore the Western Region*

HAVING despatched those monkeys in a southerly direction, Sugriva, addressing the leader, Sushena, who resembled a cloud, with bent head and joined palms approached his father-in-law, Tara's sire, who was endowed with great prowess, and spoke to him also. Then he issued orders to Maricha, the son of Maharshi and the mighty ape, Archismat, surrounded by the foremost of monkeys, possessing the splendour of Mahendra and like unto Vainateya in brilliance, and also to Maricha's offspring, the Marichas, the mighty Archirmalayas, that all these sons of the ascetic<sup>1</sup> should march towards the region of the West, saying :—

“O Ye Monkey Chiefs, let two hundred thousand monkeys, led by Sushena, set out in search of Vaidehi! Scour the countries of the Saurashttras, the Bahlikas and Chandrachitras abounding in antimony and other provinces and populous places and fair and pleasant cities and Kukshi, dense with Punnaga trees and filled with Bakula and Uddalaka trees, as well as the tracts covered with Ketakas and the auspicious streams whose cool waters flow towards the west.

“Explore the forest of the ascetics and the mountain woodlands; there, having searched the tracts resembling deserts, the towering cliffs and the mountain ranges, extremely difficult of access, proceed further, when you will behold the sea, which abounds in whales and crocodiles, O Monkeys.

[ <sup>1</sup> Marichi.



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"Then the apes shall disport themselves amidst the groves covered with Ketakas and dense with Tamala and coconut trees. Look for Sita and Ravana's stronghold there, in hills and woods, on the shores of the sea and explore Murachipattana and the delightful cities of Jatapura, Avanti and Angalapa as also the forest of Alakshita and all these spacious kingdoms.

"There, where the river Sindhu joins the ocean, is a high mountain named Somagiri, possessing a hundred peaks and covered with tall trees. On its slopes dwell the Sinhas<sup>1</sup> who carry whales and elephants to their nests. These are found on the mountain ridges and on the extensive plateaus, where wild elephants range, gratified with food, whose trumpeting resembles the roar of thunder. The monkeys, able to change their shape at will, should scour that golden summit, towering to the sky and covered with graceful trees.

"In the middle of the sea rises the golden summit of the Mountain Pariyatra, extending over a hundred yojanas. There dwell thousands of powerful Gandharvas, effulgent as fire, formidable and mischievous, resembling flames. O Valiant Monkeys, do not approach them nor seek to eat the fruits from that region. These fruit trees are guarded with ferocious vigilance by those mighty Gandharvas, nevertheless you should search for Janaki there, nor have you ought to fear if you preserve your monkey form.

"There is a mighty hill, the colour of emerald, shining like a diamond, named Vajra, covered with trees and creepers, an hundred yojanas in height and area; carefully search all the caves of that mountain.

"In the fourth quarter of the ocean is the Mt. Charavat; there Vishwakarma forged the discus Sahasrara, which together with the conch was taken possession of by Shri Vishnu when he had slain Panchajana and the Danava Hayagriva. In those deep caverns and amidst those charming slopes, search for Ravana and Videha's daughter with care.

"Beyond, rising from the depths of the sea, is the mighty mountain, Varaha with its peak of pure gold which measures four and sixty yojanas. On it is the golden city named Pragiyotisha where the giant, Naraka, dwells. There do you

<sup>1</sup> Lit. "Flying lions," possibly eagles or prehistoric birds.

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search for Ravana and Vaidehi among the beautiful plateaus and huge caves.

“Passing beyond that foremost of mountains, revealing glimpses of the gold in its depths, you will come to the Mountain Sarvasauvarna with its many fountains and waterfalls ; there elephants, wild boar, lions and tigers roar ceaselessly on every side, filling it with their clamour day and night. Then there is the mountain named Megha where the Gods crowned the fortunate Mahendra, he of the bay horses, the Vanquisher of Paka. Having passed that mountain protected by Mahendra, you should repair to a range of sixty thousand golden hills, bright as the rising sun, casting their light on every side and embellished with blossoming golden trees. In their midst rises the monarch of mountains, Meru, the foremost of hills, on whom Aditya, well pleased, conferred a boon saying :—

“ ‘ By my grace all the mountains under thy protection shall be golden by night and day and those Gods who inhabit thee, the Gandharvas and Danavas, shall both assume the radiance of gold.’

“ At dusk, the Vishwadevas, the Vasus, the Maruts and the Celestials gather to adore the Sun-god and worshipped by them the sun sinks below the horizon traversing forty thousand miles in the space of an hour, when it withdraws behind the mountain range. On the summit of that mountain rises a palace resembling the sun in splendour, consisting of countless towers, which was built by Vishwakarma and is graced by various trees filled with birds. It is the abode of the magnanimous Varuna, who bears the noose in his hand.

“ Between the Meru mountain and the Astachala Range there is a great Tala tree with ten crests, made of pure gold, which shines with extreme brilliance on a marvellous base. Search all the inaccessible places on this mountain, as well as the lakes and rivers for Ravana and Vaidehi.

“ It is there that the virtuous Merusavarni dwells, sanctified by his asceticism and equal to Brahma himself. Bowing down, you should make enquiries of the Maharishi Merusavarni, who resembles the sun, concerning Mithila's daughter.

“ From the end of the night, all those regions, that the sun illumines till it sets behind the Astachala mountains, should be

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searched by you, O Bulls among the Monkeys, but of that which lies beyond which is covered in darkness and without bourne, we know nought !

“ Search for Sita and Ravana in this region as far as the Astachala Mountain and at the end of a month, return ; those who tarry beyond this term will die. My father-in-law of long arms gifted with great prowess, I appoint as your leader ; you should abide by his commands and listen to all he says ; he is my spiritual preceptor. All of you are valorous and well able to ascertain the wisdom of a course, still you will be doing your duty in accepting him as your leader. In this wise, explore the western quarter. Having requited the good that has been done to us, we shall attain our end. Do you also determine what is pleasing to Rama and, in accord with time and place, execute it.”

Then those monkeys and their leaders with Sushena at their head, having given a due hearing to the wise counsel delivered by Sugriva, offered salutations to him and set out for the quarter protected by Varuna.

### CHAPTER 43

#### *Searchers are sent to the Northern Region*

HAVING directed his father-in-law to the western region, the Lord of the Apes spoke to that heroic monkey Shatavali, in words fraught with his own and Rama's interests :—“ With an escort of a hundred thousand rangers of the woods, the sons of Vaivasvat and thy counsellors, do thou explore the northern region, O Hero, which is crowned with the snowy peaks of Himalaya, and search everywhere for Rama's illustrious consort there.

“ O Most Circumspect of Beings, having executed this task and done that which is pleasing to the son of Dasaratha, we shall have honoured our obligation and achieved success. The magnanimous Raghava has rendered us a great service and, if we can make some return, our life will not have been lived in vain. To render assistance to any in need is to make one's life

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fruitful, even if one is under no obligation to do so ; how much more if one is able to repay one's benefactor. Reflecting on this, those who value our well-being and happiness should do all in their power to discover Janaki.

" Rama, the foremost of men, revered by all beings, the conqueror of hostile citadels, is united with us in friendship. Endowed with courage and discrimination, do you explore these numerous and dangerous regions, rivers and mountains.

" Search the lands of the Mlecchas, Pulindas, Shurasenas, Prasthalas, Bharatas, Kurus, Madrakas, Kambojas and Yavanas. The cities of Shakas should be visited by you as well as the Varadas, thereafter do you explore Himavat. In the tracts of Lodhras and Padmakas and in the Devadaru woods, search on every side for Ravana and Vaidehi. Reaching the Soma hermitage, frequented by Devas and Gandharvas, proceed to the mountain named Kala, possessing spacious plateaus. In the midst of these mountainous tracts, in the valleys and caverns search for that illustrious lady, Rama's irreproachable consort. Having traversed that golden breasted mountain, you should scale Mt. Sudarshana and further Mt. Devasakha, the refuge of birds, filled with every variety of winged creature and covered with trees of differing fragrance. Amidst its golden rocks, fountains and caves, search for Ravana and Videha's daughter.

Going beyond this mountain, you will come upon an open space, measuring four hundred miles in extent, devoid of mountains, rivers and trees, nor are any living beings to be found there. Speedily traversing this desert you will reach the stainless Kailasha Mountain which will fill you with delight. There, resembling a pale cloud, you will see the charming domain of Kuvera, of burnished gold, constructed by Vishwakarma, where lies a great lake covered with flowering lotuses and lilies, frequented by swans and ducks, where troops of Apsaras disport themselves. There the King Vaishravana, adored by the whole world, the gracious dispenser of riches, sports with the Guhyakas<sup>1</sup>. Amidst these mountains, bright as the moon, as also in the caverns, search carefully for Ravana and Sita.

<sup>1</sup> Hidden Beings attendants on Kuvera.

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Coming to Mt. Krauncha, with exceeding circumspection, enter its inaccessible caverns, which are well known to be extremely hard to penetrate. There dwell certain great and illustrious Rishis, effulgent as the sun, adored by the Gods, whose forms they assume. You should explore the other caves, plateaus and peaks of the Krauncha Mountain thoroughly. Then the tree-less Manasa peak will be seen, the abode of birds, and the scene of Kama's austerities, where no way for any creature, God or Titan exists ; this mountain should also be searched by you. Beyond this is the Mainaka Mountain where the great giant Maya has built his abode ; this place with its plateaus, plains and woods must also be searched by you. Women with the faces of horses dwell there.

" Going beyond there, you will reach the abode of the Siddhas, where the ascetics—Valakhilyas and Vaikhanasas are. Pay obeisance to those great beings, whose austerities have cleansed them from all sin and, in humility, enquire of them concerning Sita. There is the Vaikhanasa lake covered with golden lotuses, the resort of beautiful swans, bright as the dawn. The elephant of Kuvera, Sarvabhauma by name, in the company of she-elephants, wanders about in that region.

" Beyond that lake is a sky bereft of moon, sun, stars and clouds but it is illumined as if by so many solar rays, through the effulgence of god-like Sages crowned by asceticism, who rest there. Leaving that region behind, you come to the river Shailoda, on whose banks the Kichaka reeds grow, by the help of which the Siddhas cross to and fro. There are the Uttara Kurus, with whom those who have acquired spiritual merit take refuge. There are lakes there, whose waters are covered with golden lotuses and innumerable rivers abounding in dark green leaves and pools of the hue of the rising sun, embellished by clumps of crimson lotuses. Pearls and gems of great price and masses of blue flowers possessing golden stamens cover those tracts and rivers with floating islets, where gold abounds and high banks scattered with precious stones, are seen. The trees there, thronged with birds, bear fruit and flowers at all seasons, charged with delectable juices and distilling delicious perfumes, fulfilling every desire. Other excellent trees give rich attire of different kinds and ornaments of pearls, emeralds and other

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gems desired by men and women ; some also bear fruit which can be partaken of in every season. Some trees bring forth precious couches bedecked with costly and variegated coverlets and others furnish enchanting garlands, costly drinks and various kinds of viands. Women possessed of every accomplishment distinguished for their youth and beauty, are there, sporting with Gandharvas, Kinneras, Siddhas, Nagas, and Vidyadharas of great splendour ; and all those of righteous deeds engaged in pleasure and those who enjoy what is pleasant and useful, sojourn there with their wives.

“ There the continual sound of musical instruments, blended with sweet laughter, is heard, giving delight to all beings : there is none there who is not happy or wants for any desirable object and every day the enchantment of that place increases.

“ Beyond that region is the Northern Sea. There in the bosom of the deep rises the Somagiri Mountain of immense size. Though bereft of the sun, yet on account of the brilliance of the Soma mountain, that land is as bright as if Vivasvat himself had warmed it with his luminous rays. There dwells the Soul of the universe, Shambhuin, in his cosmic form as the eleven Rudras surrounded by Brahmarishis.

“ O Foremost of Monkeys, you should not venture beyond the region of the Uttara Kurus, nor is there any way for creatures to do so. That mountain, named Soma, is incapable of being scaled, even by the Gods. Sighting this mountain, turn back speedily. You may proceed so far, O Foremost of Monkeys, but the region beyond, where unending night broods, is unknown to us.

“ You should search all those places, which I have described to you, and also those I have omitted to mention. O You who are equal to the wind and fire, by discovering the place of concealment of Videha's daughter, you will be doing what is exceedingly pleasing to the son of Dasaratha as well as to me ! Having achieved your purpose, do you with your relatives, honoured by me and having acquired every distinction, your enemies slain, range the earth, the support of all beings, O Monkeys.”

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## CHAPTER 44

### *Rama gives his Ring to Hanuman*

SUGRIVA disclosed his plan to Hanuman in particular, being supremely confident that this leader, the foremost of monkeys, would accomplish his purpose.

Then the monkey king, the lord of all the dwellers in the woods, well pleased, addressed the son of the Wind-God, the peerless Hanuman, saying :—" Nowhere on the earth, in the air or sky, in the celestial regions or in the depths of the sea, do I know of any obstacle that can impede thy course, O Best of Monkeys ! All the worlds with the Asuras, Gandharvas, Nagas, Men and Gods, as well as the mountains and the seas are well known to thee. In motion, speed, skill and energy thou art the equal of thy sire, O Valiant One, and there exists no creature on this earth that is like thee in vigour, O Hero of infinite resource ! Reflect therefore on how Sita may be found ! In thee, O Hanuman, repose strength, wit, courage and policy in conjunction with the knowledge of time and place."

Realizing that success in the venture depended on Hanuman and that Hanuman himself was chosen on account of his exploits, Rama reflected : " This Lord of the Monkeys has supreme confidence in Hanuman and Hanuman too is sure of success ; he who has been tested by his deeds and who is considered worthiest by his master is certain to accomplish his purpose."

Thereupon that mighty warrior, Rama, considering that his ends were already gained, felt a great felicity flooding his mind and heart and that scourge of his enemies, highly gratified, gave Hanuman a ring inscribed with his name that would be a sign to the princess and said to him :—

" O Foremost of Monkeys, by this token, the daughter of Janaka will not fail to recognize thee as my messenger. O Warrior, thy resolution, thy courage and thine experience as also Sugriva's words seem to me to predict success."

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Thereupon, taking the ring and placing it to his forehead, that foremost of monkeys, offering obeisance to the feet of Rama, prepared to depart. Taking with him a mighty band of monkeys, that hero, the son of Pavana, resembling the moon in a cloudless sky encircled by stars, set forth.

And Rama addressed that mighty warrior saying :—" O Thou endowed with the strength of a lion, I depend on thy valour ; by summoning up thy great resources, do all in thy power, O Son of the Wind, O Hanuman, to bring back the daughter of Janaka."

### CHAPTER 45

#### *The Departure of the Monkeys*

SUMMONING all the monkeys, the Lord of the Apes, Sugriva, spoke to them touching the success of Rama's enterprise, and said :—

" O Chiefs of the Monkeys, knowing my commands, go forth and search those regions indicated by me." Whereupon, covering the earth like locusts, the army started out. During the month fixed for the search for Sita, Rama and Lakshmana remained on the mountain Prasravana.

The valiant Shatavali set out with all speed for the north, that marvellous region where the monarch of the mountain rises<sup>1</sup> whilst the leader of the monkey bands, Vinata, went towards the east. Tara,<sup>2</sup> Angada and others, in company with that monkey born of Pavana, marched towards the southern region inhabited by Agastya ; and Sushena, that lion among monkeys, went to the west, that fearful region protected by Varuna.

Having despatched the generals of his forces to each of the quarters, that king of the monkey hosts experienced supreme satisfaction.

Under the orders of their sovereign, all the monkey leaders departed in great haste, each in the direction assigned to him and, full of valour, those monkeys shouted, cheered, howled and

<sup>1</sup> Mount Meru.

<sup>2</sup> The General Tara.



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chattered, rushing on and on amidst a great uproar. Having listened to the instructions of their monarch, the leaders of these monkeys cried : “ We shall bring Sita back and slay Ravana ”. Some said : “ I alone shall defeat Ravana in open combat and having laid him low, shall deliver the daughter of Janaka, still trembling with fear, saying to her ‘ Rest here, thou art weary ’.” Others said : “ Singlehanded I shall recover Janaki even if it be from the depth of hell ; I shall uproot the trees, cleave the mountains, penetrate the earth and churn up the ocean.” One said, “ Without doubt I can clear four miles in one bound ! ” and another, “ I can clear a hundred,” and yet another, “ I am able to leap more than a hundred. Neither on earth, in the sky nor on the sea nor mountains nor in forests, not even in the nether regions can anything bar my progress ”.

Thus in turn did the monkeys, proud of their strength, speak in the presence of their king.

### CHAPTER 46

#### *Sugriva narrates his Travels through the World*

THE leaders of the monkeys having departed, Rama enquired of Sugriva saying :—“ How is it that thou knowest all the quarters of the earth ? ”

Then Sugriva, bowing low, said to Rama : “ Hear me and I will tell thee all.

“ When Bali pursued the giant Dundubhi, in the form of a buffalo, in the direction of the Malaya mountain, Mahisha<sup>1</sup> entered a cave in that mountain and Bali, desirous of slaying that Asura, followed him.

“ I remained obediently at the entrance of the cave, but a whole year passed and Bali did not re-emerge. Then the cavern was filled with foaming blood which gushed forth, and seeing this, I was terrified and consumed with a burning grief on account of my brother. Distracted, I reflected : ‘ My elder

<sup>1</sup> Another name of Dundubhi, meaning “ great or powerful animal,” a buffalo.

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brother is certainly dead ' and I placed a rock, as large as a hill, at the mouth of the cave, thinking ' The buffalo will not be able to come out and will die ' ; after which I returned to Kishkindha giving up all hope of Bali being alive.

" There obtaining the mighty kingdom with Tara and Ruma, surrounded by my friends, I began to pass my days in peace.

" That bull among monkeys, however, having slain Dundubhi returned, and trembling with fear, in all humility, I made over the crown to him.

" That wicked wretch, however, beside himself with rage, wishing to slay me, followed me whilst I sought to fly with my ministers. It was then that, hotly pursued by him, I passed by various streams, forests and cities. The earth appeared to me like the reflection of a whirling firebrand seen in a mirror or a puddle.<sup>1</sup>

" Journeying towards the eastern region, I beheld many kinds of trees, beautiful mountains, charming caverns and lakes. I saw the Udaya Mountain rich in gold and the white sea, the abode of Apsaras. Pursued by Bali, flying on and on, O Lord, I turned and continued my course then, changing my direction once more, I made for the south, covered by the Vindhya Forest and embellished with sandal wood trees. Thereafter, seeing Bali among the woods, on the mountains, I went westwards still followed by him.

" It is thus that I grew conversant with every kind of region and finally reached the Astachala Mountains. Beyond that most beautiful and elevated of ranges I turned to the north and passed Himavat, Meru and the Northern Sea.

" Unable to find refuge from Bali, the sagacious Hanuman said to me :—' O King, I recollect now that the Lord of the Monkeys was formerly cursed by the Sage Matanga in this very hermitage. If he should enter this asylum, his head will be split into a hundred pieces ; we can, therefore, take up our abode here without anxiety.'

" O Son of a King, I, thereupon, went to the Rishyamuka Mountain, nor did Bali dare to come there for fear of the Sage Matanga. This is how, O King, I visited every part of the world and took refuge in this cave."

<sup>1</sup> Lit. : Made by the imprint of a cow's hoof.

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## CHAPTER 47

### *The Return of the Monkeys*

IN order to find Vaidehi, those leaders of monkeys, in obedience to their sovereign's will, speedily went forth in all directions to their destinations, and they explored lakes, streams, plains, cities and tracts rendered impassible by torrents. Then those chiefs of the monkey bands searched the regions described by Sugriva with their mountains, woods and forests. Engaged during the day in seeking for Sita, when night fell, they stretched themselves on the ground, and coming to trees covered with fruits in all seasons, they slept there.

Counting the day of their departure as the first, at the end of a month, giving up hope, they returned to their king on the Prasravana mountain.

Having scoured the eastern region with his forces, the mighty Vinata returned without having seen Sita. Thereafter the great monkey Shatabali came back disappointed with his forces, having scoured the whole of the northern quarter. And Sushena, at the end of the month, ranging the western region without success, presented himself in company with his monkeys before Sugriva.

Coming before Sugriva who was seated with Rama on a ridge of the Prasravana Mountain, and paying obeisance to them, Sushena said: "We have searched all the mountains, deep woods, valleys, ravines and the countries situated on the shores of the sea. All the places described by thee have been scoured by us, as also all the jungles intertwined by creepers abounding in thickets that are impassable and the hilly districts. Huge animals have been encountered by us, which we have slain, and we have searched these densely wooded regions again and again, O Lord of the Monkeys. It is Hanuman, who is mighty and nobly born, who will discover Maithili; the son of the Wind has undoubtedly gone to where Sita has been taken."

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### CHAPTER 48

#### *Angada slays an Asura*

THE monkey Hanuman, accompanied by Tara<sup>1</sup> and Angada, swiftly set out to the quarter assigned to him by Sugriva. With all those leaders of monkeys, he travelled a great distance and explored the woods and caves of the Vindhya Mountains. Rugged crags, impassable rivers, lakes, vast jungles, groves, innumerable hills covered with forests were searched by the monkeys on every side, without their being able to find Maithili, the daughter of Janaka, anywhere.

Subsisting on various roots and fruits, they were overcome by fatigue in that uninhabited and waterless region amidst the fearful ravines and solitary places. Having searched that immense area extremely hard of access, with its mighty forests, containing caves, all those foremost of monkeys fearlessly penetrated into another equally inhospitable region, where the trees yielded neither fruit, flowers nor foliage and where the streams were dried up and even roots were rare. There, neither buffaloe nor deer, nor elephants, tigers, birds nor any other animals, that are found in the forest, could be seen. There were neither trees, grass, plants nor herbs, and in that place there were no pleasant pools with flowering or fragrant lotuses and no bees to be observed.

There dwelt the fortunate Sage, Kandu, a treasury of asceticism, of truthful speech, whose austerities had rendered him invincible and who was irascible, having lost his young son at the age of ten years in the forest. Filled with wrath on account of his death, that great-souled One had laid a curse on the entire vast forest, rendering it unfit to harbour any creature. This inaccessible region, deserted by beasts and birds, the hidden recesses of the woods, the mountain caves and the bends of the rivers were carefully searched by the monkeys in order to carry out Sugriva's desire, but they were unable to find the daughter of Janaka or her abductor, Ravana, there.

<sup>1</sup> The General Tara.

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Having entered a wood, overgrown with creepers and briars, they beheld a terrible titan, of dreadful deeds, cherishing no fear, even for the Gods. Seeing that formidable titan, who stood erect like a great hill, the monkeys pressed close to each other girding up their loins.

Then that mighty Asura said to them "You are lost!" and, clenching his fists, rushed upon them in fury, but Angada, the Son of Bali, thinking it was Ravana, struck him with the palm of his hand with such force, that he fell to the earth like a great hill, vomiting blood. When he had ceased to breathe, the triumphant monkeys searched that mountain cavern; and having satisfied themselves that it had been thoroughly explored, those dwellers of the woods entered into another fearful cave. After having searched that place also, they emerged exhausted and wholly dispirited sat down at the foot of a solitary tree.

### CHAPTER 49

#### *The Monkeys search the Southern Region in vain*

THEN the eminently wise Angada addressed all the monkeys and, though himself fatigued, exhorted them to take courage, saying :

"We have searched the forests, mountains, rivers and impenetrable wilds, valleys and caverns with care, without finding the daughter of Janaka, Sita, or that wicked wretch, the titan, who bore her away. A great part of the time assigned to us by Sugriva, whose commands are inexorable, has elapsed; therefore, banishing languor, despondency, torpor and fatigue, together let us examine every region once again. Search in such a way that Sita may be discovered by us. Perseverance, ability and ardour are said to conduce to success; I therefore address you thus :—O Dwellers in the Woods, explore the whole inaccessible forest to-day without counting the cost, success will wholly depend on your exertions; to permit yourselves to be overcome by fatigue or give way to sleep is not fitting. Sugriva is irascible and inflicts harsh punishments; he is ever to be feared, as also the magnanimous Rama. I speak in your own

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interests ; therefore, if you concur, act accordingly or let someone point out what alternative will benefit us all, O Monkeys."

Hearing Angada's words, Gandhamadana, though faint from thirst and fatigue, spoke in clear accents, saying :—" That which Angada has said is worthy of him and is appropriate and timely, let us act upon it ! Let us search the hills, caves, rocks, desert places and waterfalls, in accord with the instructions given by Sugriva ; let us scour the forest and the mountain ridges together ! "

Then the monkeys, rising, full of valour, began to range the south covered by the Vindhya forests, afresh. Scaling the mountain that resembled an autumnal cloud, rich in silver, with its innumerable peaks and valleys, those foremost of monkeys, eager to find Sita, ranged the enchanting Lodhra forests and the woods of Saptaparna trees. Ascending to the summit of the mountain, though endued with immense energy, they were overcome with fatigue, yet they did not see Vaidehi, the beloved consort of Rama, anywhere. Having surveyed that hill with its innumerable ravines, as far as eye could see, the monkeys looking on every side, descended and, reaching the base, harassed and beside themselves, halted for an instant under a tree ; then finding themselves less fatigued, they prepared to explore the southern region again.

Thereafter the chiefs of the monkeys, with Hanuman at their head, began to range the Vindhya hills once more.

## CHAPTER 50

### *Hanuman and his Companions enter the Rikshabila Cavern*

THE Monkey Hanuman, in company with the General Tara and Angada, once again explored the deep woods and ravines of the Vindhya range. Those monkeys searched the caverns which resounded with the roar of lions and tigers as well as the inaccessible and mighty torrents. Finally they came to the south-western summit of the mountain and, while they rested there, time passed.

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That region is hard to explore on account of the vast extent of the forests and the dangerous ravines and caverns ; nevertheless the Son of the Wind examined it all thoroughly. Separated from each other by a short distance, Gaja, Gavaksha, Gavaya, Sharabha, Gandhamadana, Mainda, Dvidida, Hanuman and Jambavan, the youthful Prince Angada and Tara, dwellers of the woods, began to search those regions in the south covered by the mountain range.

While they were exploring this place on every side, they observed the opening to a cave named Rikshabila, difficult of entry, guarded by a giant. Tortured with hunger and thirst and overcome with exhaustion they espied this cavity overgrown by trees, bushes and creepers, from which herons, swans, geese and waterfowl were issuing, dripping with water and covered with the pollen of lotuses.

Drawing near to that fragrant cave, difficult of access, those monkeys were struck with astonishment and desired to enter it. Then those foremost of monkeys, seeing signs of water, full of joy, approached that subterranean chamber abounding in every kind of creature, resembling the abode of Indra, which was impenetrable and fearful to behold.

And Hanuman, the son of the Wind-god, who resembled the peak of a mountain, said to those redoubtable monkeys, who dwelt in the woods and forests :—" We have explored the southern region covered with a chain of mountains ; we are exhausted with fatigue and unable to find Maithili. From yonder cave, swans, cranes, herons and waterfowl are emerging on every side, drenched with water. Without doubt there is a well or pool to be found there for these trees at the mouth of the cave are green."

Hanuman having spoken thus, all the monkeys entered into the dark cave, bereft of sun and moon, that caused their hair to stand on end. They heard the roar of lions and the sound of deer and birds and those invincible monkeys felt their courage and prowess fail ; moving with the speed of the wind and despite the darkness, their sight being unimpaired, they penetrated deep into the cave and beheld a luminous, enchanting and marvellous region filled with different kinds of trees of varying fragrance. Pressing close to one another, they advanced four

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miles into the interior and fainting with fatigue, bewildered, seeking for water, they continued to descend into the darkness. Emaciated, their faces woe-begone, spent, despairing of their lives, those monkeys then beheld a light. Happily they approached that spot and saw trees glistening like gold, possessing the brilliance of fire, and they beheld Salas, Talas, Tamalas, Pun-nagas, Vanjulas, Dhavas, Champakas, Nagavrikshas and Karnikaras in full flower with clusters of golden blossom, crimson buds, twigs and creepers adorning them, dazzling as the dawn, their trunks being of emerald and their bark luminous. There were also lakes of blue lotus, abounding in waterfowl, there, and great golden trees encircled that place, that shone like the first light of dawn and fishes of gold and enormous lotuses were to be seen in pools of tranquil waters. Gold and silver palaces were to be found there with little windows of refined gold festooned with chains of pearls, the floors paved with silver and gold and encrusted with pearls and diamonds.

And the monkeys beheld splendid mansions everywhere and trees laden with fruit and flowers that shone like coral and precious gems and golden bees and honey in abundance. Couches and marvellous seats of immense size, decorated with gold and diamonds, drew their gaze, as well as gold and silver vessels, heaps of aloes and sandal, pure foods, fruits and roots, costly vehicles, delicious syrups, priceless raiment and great piles of woollen cloths and wonderful skins.

Whilst wandering here and there about that subterranean chamber, those courageous monkeys beheld a woman at a short distance from them. Attired in robes of bark and a black antelope skin, that ascetic, given to fasting, shone with a great effulgence.

Astonished, those monkeys halted suddenly and Hanuman addressed her saying :—" Who art thou ? To whom does this cavern belong ? "

Bowing down to that aged woman, Hanuman, who resembled a mountain, with joined palms, enquired of her: "Who art thou ? To whom does this retreat, this cave and its jewels belong ? "



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## CHAPTER 51

### *The Tale of the Ascetic*

HAVING spoken thus to that blessed ascetic given to the practice of austerity, who was clad in bark and a black antelope skin, Hanuman added :—

“ We entered this cave enveloped in darkness being wholly exhausted with hunger and thirst and overcome with fatigue ; having penetrated into the depths to seek for something to eat, we have become distracted on seeing all these marvels so that we have almost taken leave of our senses.

“ To whom do these golden trees belong, that shine like the sun about to rise and these pure foods, roots and fruits ; these mansions of gold and silver with their windows of gold refined in the crucible and their network of pearls ? Who has produced these golden trees covered with marvellous flowers and fruit emitting a delicious fragrance, the golden lotuses that float on the pure waters, the golden fish and the turtles ? Are they sprung from thy power or do they owe their existence to another ? It behoves thee to tell us, who are ignorant in the matter.”

Hearing the words of Hanuman, the virtuous ascetic, engaged in the welfare of all beings, replied to Hanuman saying :—“ O Foremost of Monkeys, Maya is the name of the magician of great powers, by whom this entire golden grove has been constructed. He who created this enchanting and celestial place was formerly the chief architect of the Giants.<sup>1</sup> Having practised austerity for a thousand years in the vast forest, he obtained a boon from the Grandsire of the World, in virtue of which he attained complete mastery in his art, as well as an absolute control over the materials required therein. Having accomplished everything, that wonderful one, commanding every enjoyment, for a time lived happily in the mighty forest. Thereafter he conceived a great passion for the nymph Hema, whereupon Purandara hurled his thunderbolt at him and slew him.

<sup>1</sup> Danavas or Daityas.

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“Then Brahma bestowed this marvellous forest with his golden mansion on Hema with the perpetual enjoyment of her desires. I, Swayamprabha by name, the daughter of Merusavarni, guard this dwelling belonging to Hema, who, skilled in the arts of dancing and singing, is my dear friend, O Foremost of Monkeys ! By her favour, this vast forest has been given into my hands. Now tell me for what purpose and with what motive you have come hither ? Why are you roaming in these inaccessible woods ? Having partaken of these fruits and roots and drunk of the pure water, tell me all.”

### CHAPTER 52

#### *Swayamprabha frees the Monkeys from the Cave*

THAT virtuous ascetic, greatly mystified, addressed all those leaders of monkeys who were now rested, saying :—

“O Monkeys, if, satisfied by the fruits, your fatigue is alleviated, I would fain listen to your story if it is fit to be heard by me.”

Hearing these words, Hanuman, the Son of Maruta began to relate all with perfect candour, saying : “The Sovereign of the whole world, Rama, who is equal to Mahendra and Varuna, the illustrious son of Dasaratha, retired to the Dandaka Forest in company with his brother Lakshmana and his consort Vaidehi. The latter was forcibly carried away by Ravana.

“His friend is that valiant monkey named Sugriva. By that monarch, the foremost of monkeys, we have been sent hither and with the assistance of those led by Angada, we have been dispatched to search the southern region inhabited by Agastya and protected by Yama. We have been commissioned to search for Sita, the daughter of Videha and the demon Ravana, who is able to change his form at will. Having scoured the forests and the seas of the south, overcome with hunger, we sat down at the foot of the trees. Our faces drained of colour, absorbed in thought, we were sunk in an ocean of anxiety which we were unable to cross.

“Casting our eyes round, we observed a huge cave hidden by trees and creepers and enveloped in gloom. Now swans, geese

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and osprey flew out from that cave their wings dripping with water, and I said to those monkeys, 'Let us enter there!' which all agreed to do. Anxious to accomplish our purpose, we went in grasping each others hands, thus forcing an entry into that dark cave ; this is our purpose and the reason why we have come hither. Having come here, famished and exhausted, we, who were sorely tried by hunger, have been entertained on fruits and roots with the traditional hospitality. Thou hast saved us, who were weary and suffering from starvation ; now say what service the monkeys may render thee in return ? ”

Thus addressed by the apes, the all-knowing Swayamprabha replied to those monkey leaders, saying : “ I am well pleased with all these excellent monkeys ; I am but fulfilling my duty and have no need of anything.”

Thus answered in words filled with nobility and virtue, Hanuman addressed that irreproachable lady saying : “ We have all found refuge with thee, O Virtuous Ascetic, but the time fixed by the magnanimous Sugriva has run out since we entered the cave, it behoves thee, therefore, to assist us to leave this place. If the commands of Sugriva be disregarded, it will mean death for us. Please deliver us all ; the fear of Sugriva afflicts us. Great is the task that has been undertaken by us and if we remain here, that work of ours will not be accomplished.”

Thus addressed by Hanuman, the ascetic answered him saying :—“ For a living being to emerge from this cave alive, is hard, but by the power of my asceticism acquired through self control I shall deliver all the monkeys from this subterranean chamber. Do you all close your eyes, for none will succeed in issuing from this place if their eyes remain open.”

Then, desirous of going out, all those magnanimous monkeys instantly closed their eyes covering them with their hands, possessed of slender fingers, and in the twinkling of an eye, the ascetic transported them outside the cave and having saved them from danger, in order to encourage them, said :—

“ This is the auspicious Vindhya Mountain covered with trees and herbs, there the Prasravana Mountain and the great ocean. May good fortune attend you ! I go to my abode, O Foremost of Monkeys.”

With these words Swayamprabha re-entered the cave.

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### CHAPTER 53

#### *Angada and his Companions consider what Course to take*

THEN the monkeys beheld that awe-inspiring ocean, the abode of Varuna, shoreless, thunderous and abounding in huge billows.

Now the month fixed by the king as the term set for the search had passed while they were exploring that mountain fastness, the miraculous creation of Maya. Sitting down at the foot of the Vindhya Mountain amidst the blossoming trees, those high-souled monkeys anxiously began to reflect among themselves.

Perceiving the spring trees bending beneath the weight of flowers interlaced by hundreds of creepers, they were filled with apprehension. Recognizing the advent of spring and knowing the time appointed for their task had run out, each in turn sank to the ground.

Then that monkey having the shoulders of a lion, with plump and long arms, the youthful Prince Angada, endowed with wisdom, duly honouring the aged apes and other dwellers in the woods, spoke thus :—

“ At the command of the monarch of the monkeys, we set out and, while we sojourned in the cave, a full month has passed away, O Monkeys. The month Ashvayuj<sup>1</sup> was the time fixed, which was not to be exceeded. This is known to you ! What should now be done ? Receiving the mandate from your master, you who are his trusted men, politic, devoted to his welfare, skilled in every work, incomparable in its execution and renowned in every quarter, have set out on this campaign with me as your appointed leader. Now, having failed to attain our objective, we shall certainly die, of this there is no shadow of doubt. Who, failing to execute the commands of the King of the Monkeys, can live at ease ? The time allotted by Sugriva has run out, all that remains is for us, the dwellers in the woods, to die fasting. Stern by nature, jealous of his authority, he will not forgive us if we return having transgressed his orders. He

<sup>1</sup> September–October.

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will regard it as a crime if we come before him without news of Sita ; it is therefore better to allow ourselves to die of hunger here than give up all hope of seeing our sons, wives, wealth and homes. It were preferable to die here than perish ignominiously at the hands of Sugriva. Further, I was not installed as heir-apparent by Sugriva but by Rama, that king among men of immortal exploits. Entertaining enmity to me of old, the king, finding me at fault, will determine to take my life by cruel means. Of what use is it to meet death in the presence of my friends who will witness the last moments of my existence ? I shall remain here on the sacred shore of the sea for the last supreme fast."

Hearing the words of the crown prince, all those monkeys, exclaimed in sympathy :—

" Sugriva is harsh by nature and Raghava is devoted to his tender spouse. The king, perceiving that the time has past without our having been successful in our undertaking and that we have not found Vaidehi, will certainly put us to death in order to do what is agreeable to Rama. Those who fail (to execute his commands) may not enter the presence of a king. Having come hither as the principal servants of Sugriva, we must either find Sita or obtain information concerning her or else we must enter the region of Yama, O Hero."

Hearing the monkeys speak thus in their terror, the General Tara said :—" Of what use is it to yield to despair ? Let us re-enter the subterranean chamber and take up our abode there. That place abounding in flowers, food and water, which has been created by the power of illusion, is inaccessible. There we need not fear Purandara Himself or Raghava or the King of the Monkeys."

At these words to which Angada himself assented, all the monkeys with renewed confidence, cried :—" Without delay, let us from now on employ those means that will save us from death."

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## CHAPTER 54

### *Hanuman seeks to discourage Angada from his Design*

WHEN the General Tara, who was as radiant as the moon, had spoken thus, Hanuman deemed that Angada had already usurped supreme authority. He knew the son of Bali to be endowed with the eightfold intelligence, the four powers and the fourteen qualities,<sup>1</sup> to be possessed of valour, energy and martial ardour, waxing in glory like the moon in the bright fortnight, the equal of Brihaspati in wisdom, in bravery resembling his sire and obedient to Tara's counsel as Purandara regards the instruction of Shukra.<sup>2</sup>

Thereupon, Hanuman, versed in all branches of learning, resolved to win over Angada, who had become lax in the service of his sovereign and bring him back to the right path. Reflecting on the four means for bringing about peace, he chose the second, that of sowing dissension amongst the monkeys by subtle suggestion ; when the disaffection was general, he sought to instil fear in Angada's heart, by harsh words uttered in severe tones :—

He said :—" O Son of Bali, surely thou art a warrior more skilful even than thy sire and art able to govern the monkey kingdom as well as he, but, O Foremost of Monkeys, the apes were ever fickle by nature. Bereft of their wives and sons, they will never suffer thy rule. This I declare to thee in the presence

<sup>1</sup> Eightfold Intelligence—The quality of accepting the truth and what is right, cherishing it, remembering it, propagating it. Knowledge of the positive and negative side of a matter. Knowledge of the ultimate essence.

Four Powers—Physical power, mental power, power of resource, power of making friends.

Fourteen Qualities—Knowledge of Time and Place. Endurance. Empirical knowledge. Skill. Physical strength. Power to conceal one's counsel. The honouring of one's obligations and promises. Heroism. Appreciation of the enemy's strength and one's own in relation to it. Gratitude. Beneficence to one's dependents or suppliants. Non-acceptance of insult. Freedom from uncontrolled movements. Poise.

<sup>2</sup> Shukra—Indra's spiritual preceptor.

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of all ! Neither by conciliation, gifts nor penalties shalt thou succeed in drawing Jambavan, Nila, the mighty ape, Suhotra, or myself to thy side. One who is strong can overcome the weak and usurp his place, therefore, he who is weak should, for his own safety, never incur the enmity of the strong. This cave, that thou deemest to be a safe refuge and which is said to be impregnable, can easily be penetrated by Lakshmana with his arrows. Formerly this tiny rift was made by Indra hurling his thunderbolt against it, but Lakshmana will pierce it like a leaf by means of his keen arrows. He possesses innumerable arrows of this kind, whose impact resembles lightning, capable of shattering the mountains themselves.

“ O Scourge of Thy Foes, as soon as thou dost install thyself in that place, the monkeys, remembering their wives and sons, will decide to forsake thee. Pining for domestic happiness, ever restless, anxious and weary of their pitiable plight, they will abandon thee. Thereafter, bereft of friends, relatives and those who seek thy welfare, even the trembling of a blade of grass will fill thee with terror.

“ Lakshmana’s arrows, irresistible in flight, keen, formidable and of exceeding velocity, will transfix thee where thou hast sought to conceal thyself.

“ If, however, assuming a humble guise, thou, with us, dost present thyself before Sugriva, he will establish thee in the kingdom and restore thee as rightful heir. A virtuous monarch, firm in his vows, honorable and loyal, he desires thy welfare and will assuredly not kill thee. Thy paternal uncle is devoted to thy mother and wishes to do what is agreeable to her, this is the purpose of his life and she has no other son, therefore, O Angada, return with us.”

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### CHAPTER 55

#### *The Monkeys decide to die of Hunger*

HEARING Hanuman's speech uttered with humility, filled with wisdom and justice and reflecting honour on Sugriva, Angada answered him saying :—

“ Stability, purity of mind and disposition, compassion, rectitude, daring and perseverance are unknown to Sugriva. He who, while her son was living, united himself to the beloved queen of his elder brother, on whom he should rightfully have looked as a mother, is to be condemned. What does he know of morality who, while his brother was in the grip of an Asura, closed up the opening of the cave? What gratitude will he manifest who, having clasped his hand in friendship, forgot the favours received from his great benefactor, Raghava, of imperishable deeds? Where is righteousness in one who directed us to search for Sita here, not from fear of disloyalty but of Lakshmana? Who would trust that fickle, impious and ungrateful wretch, more especially those sprung from his own race? Whether he be possessed of good qualities or no, having established me in the kingdom, will he suffer the son of his enemy to live? How can I, whose counsels have been disclosed, who have been found guilty, who am powerless, poor and weak, expect to survive if I repair to Kishkindha? In his desire to retain the throne, Sugriva, who is wily, cunning and cruel, will assuredly place me in chains. For me death through fasting is preferable to being tortured and confined. Let all the monkeys abandon me here and return home. I vow I shall never re-enter the city but shall stay here and fast to the end; death is better for me.

“ Bowing to the king and also to the mighty Raghava, enquire after their welfare for me and bring news of my health and state to my adopted mother Ruma. To Tara, my real mother, offer consolation, for she is compassionate and pious and naturally full of love for her son. When she learns of my death, she will certainly yield up her life.”



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Having said this, Angada, making obeisance to the elders, his countenance woe-begone, weeping, spreading out some kusha grass sat down on the ground ; as he sat there, those foremost of monkeys groaned, burning tears falling from their eyes. Thereupon surrounding Angada, condemning Sugriva and praising Bali, those monkeys resolved to starve themselves to death and, seating themselves on the seashore on heaps of darbha grass, pointing towards the south, those excellent monkeys sipping water, facing the east, resolved to die, saying:—"This is better for us !"

As they spoke of the exile of Rama, the death of Dasaratha, the carnage in Janasthana, the slaying of Jatayu, the abduction of Vaidehi, the killing of Bali and the wrath of Raghava, those monkeys were filled with fear ; and while those innumerable monkeys, resembling the peaks of mountains sat there, the whole region with its torrents and caverns resounded with their lamentations like the roll of thunder in the skies.

### CHAPTER 56

#### *The Intervention of Sampati*

WHILE the monkeys remained seated on the mountain plateau resolved on their last great fast, the King of the Vultures by chance came to that place. That long-lived bird, the fortunate brother of Jatayu, was renowned for his strength and prowess.

Issuing from a cave on the mighty Vindhya Mountain, he observed the monkeys seated there and, highly gratified, said:—"Every man reapeth the fruit of his former acts, on account of this, after a long time, this food comes to me. I shall eat up these monkeys one by one as they die."

Eyeing those apes, the Vulture expressed himself thus, and hearing the utterance of that famished bird, Angada, full of apprehension, addressed Hanuman in faint accents, saying:—

"Behold, on account of Sita, Death, the descendant of Vivasvat, has come to this place to destroy the monkeys. Rama's purpose not having been effected nor the mandate of the

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king obeyed, this calamity has overtaken the monkeys unaware. Thou art conversant in detail with all that Jatayu, that Prince of Vultures did for the sake of Sita. All beings, even those born of the mating of beasts, desire to please Rama at the cost of their lives as we have done. On account of Rama's love and compassion, people bear each other affection and pity. The blessed Jatayu voluntarily laid down his life for the good of Rama ; we too, exhausted and about to die, came to this forest to render a service to the Son of Raghu. We have searched the woods in vain for Maithili. Happy is that Prince of Vultures who was slain in combat by Ravana for he is freed from the fear of Sugriva and has attained the supreme abode. The death of Jatayu and King Dasaratha and the abduction of Sita has placed the monkeys in jeopardy. The sojourn of Rama and Lakshmana in the forest with Sita, Raghava's slaying of Bali with an arrow, the slaughter of innumerable demons by Rama in his wrath, all owe their origin to those boons granted to Kaikeyi."

Hearing these piteous words and seeing the monkeys stretched on the ground the magnanimous King of the Vultures was deeply moved and that sharp beaked bird cried out :—

"Who is it who, causing my heart to tremble, speaks thus of the death of my brother, dearer to me than life itself? How did the demon and the vulture come to fight in Janasthana? It is after a long time that I hear the name of my brother spoken. I wish to descend from this lofty mountain height. I am well pleased to hear of my youthful and valiant brother, renowned for his exploits. I wish to learn of the death of my brother, Jatayu, O Foremost of Monkeys, and how King Dasaratha, whose elder son is Rama, beloved of his elders, came to be his friend? I am unable to fly in consequence of my wings having been scorched by the rays of the sun. Assist me to descend from this mountain, O Conquerers of your Foes !"

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## CHAPTER 57

### *Angada's Narrative*

THOUGH the voice of Sampati faltered on account of grief, the Chiefs of the Monkeys did not trust him, doubting his intentions.

Seated for the purpose of fasting to death, the monkeys, seeing that vulture, framed the following resolution, saying :—

“ Let us help him to descend and he will then devour us all ; should he do so, while we are seated here fasting, we shall have achieved our purpose and shall speedily attain success.”

Having thus resolved, they assisted the vulture to descend from the summit of the mountain and Angada addressed him saying :—

“ There was a great King of the Monkeys named Riksharajas, the founder of our race ; he was my grandsire, O Bird. He had two virtuous sons, Bali and Sugriva, both were exceedingly powerful. My father Bali, was famed throughout the world for his exploits.

“ Now it happened that the Sovereign of the whole earth, the descendant of Ikshwaku, the great and illustrious car warrior, Rama, the son of King Dasaratha, obedient to the injunctions of his sire, fixed in the path of righteousness, entered the forest of Dandaka with his brother Lakshmana and his consort Vaidehi. His spouse was forcibly borne away from Janasthana by Ravana and the friend of Rama's father, the Prince of Vultures, Jatayu, observed Sita, Videha's daughter, being carried through the air. Having shattered Ravana's chariot and released Maithili, that vulture being old and exhausted finally fell under Ravana's blows. Slain by the powerful Ravana, he had his funeral rites performed by Rama himself and attained the celestial abode. Then Raghava allied himself with my paternal uncle, Sugriva, and slew my sire, who had banished him from the kingdom with his ministers.

“ Having killed Bali, Rama installed Sugriva as Lord and Monarch of all the Monkeys. We have been sent by him in all

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directions under Rama's orders to search for Sita but we have not found Vaidehi, as by night one is unable to perceive the splendour of the sun. Having explored the Dandaka Forest, we, through ignorance, penetrated into a cave through a rift in the earth. That cavern was constructed by the illusive power of Maya and there we passed the month fixed by the King of the Monkeys, as the term appointed ; while executing the commands of Sugriva, we exceeded the time fixed and from fear have seated ourselves here, resolved to die of hunger, for, if we return to face the wrath of Kakutstha, Sugriva and Lakshmana, we shall surely be put to death ! ”

### CHAPTER 58

#### *Sampati tells the monkeys of Sita's Place of Concealment*

HEARING the pitiful narrative of the monkeys, who had resolved to give up their lives, the vulture in mournful accents, with tears in his eyes, answered them saying :—

“ O Monkeys, you have told me, that Jatayu, my younger brother, was slain in combat by Ravana, who was his superior in strength. Old and bereft of my wings, I can only resign myself to these tidings for I no longer have the power to avenge my brother's death.

“ Formerly, when Indra slew the demon Vritra, my brother and I, wishing to prove which of us was superior, soared into the sky, drawing nearer and nearer to the sun with its aureole of rays. Flinging ourselves into the currents of air, we rose rapidly higher and higher, but the sun having reached its zenith, Jatayu grew faint. Seeing my brother tormented by the sun's rays, I covered him affectionately with my wings, for he was suffering greatly, whereupon they were scorched and I fell on the Vindhya Mountain, O Foremost of Monkeys, where I remained, not knowing what had befallen him.”

Thus addressed by Sampati, Jatayu's brother, the eminently sagacious Prince Angada answered :—“ If thou art indeed the brother of Jatayu and hast heard what I have related, then tell

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us, dost thou know aught of that titan's abode? Say, if thou knowest, whether the retreat of that short-sighted, vilest of demons, Ravana, is near or far away?"

Then the illustrious elder brother of Jatayu answered in words worthy of him, causing delight to the monkeys, and said: "O Monkeys, my pinions being burnt, I am a vulture bereft of strength, yet by my words alone, I shall render Rama a signal service.

"I know the realm of Varuna and those covered by Vishnu's three strides. I am also conversant with the wars between the Gods and Asuras and the churning of the ocean, from whence the Amrita issued. Though age has deprived me of strength and my vitality is ebbing away, this mission of Rama's must be my first concern.

"I saw a young and lovely woman, beautifully attired, being carried off by the wicked Ravana and that beautiful creature was crying out 'O Rama', 'O Rama', 'O Lakshmana'. Tearing off her ornaments she cast them on the earth; her silken cloak, resembling the rays of the sun striking on a mountain summit, shone against the dark skin of the demon like a lightning flash irradiating a cloudy sky. Since she was calling 'Rama', 'Rama' I believe her to have been Sita. Now hear me, and I will tell you where the abode of that demon is to be found.

"The son of Vishravas and brother of Kuvera, that demon, named Ravana, resides in the city of Lanka, constructed by Vishwakarma, which lies a full hundred yojanas from here on an island in the sea, furnished with golden gateways and ramparts of Kancana gold, with lofty palaces gleaming with Hema gold adorning it. A great wall, bright as the sun, encircles it, and it is there that the unfortunate Vaidehi, attired in a silken cloth, is confined in Ravana's inner apartments, carefully guarded by demon women. It is there you will find Sita.

"Four hundred miles from here on the southern shore of the sea dwells Ravana. O Monkeys, hie thither speedily and demonstrate your valour! By supernatural means, I know that having seen that place you will return. The first course is the path taken by the fork-tailed shrikes and others living on grain; the second by those who live on insects and fruit; the third by

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cocks ; the fourth by herons, hawks and birds of prey ; the fifth by vultures ; the sixth by swans endowed with strength, energy, youth and beauty and the last by eagles ; we have all derived our origin from Vainateya,<sup>1</sup> O Foremost of Monkeys. I shall avenge that execrable deed of that eater of flesh (Ravana) as also his cruelty to my brother.<sup>2</sup>

“ Resting here, I am able to see Ravana and Janaki, for we all possess the supersensual sight of Suparna.<sup>3</sup> It is by virtue of our nature and on account of the food we eat, that we can see clearly to a distance of four hundred miles. We are instinctively drawn to search for our food at a distance, whilst other birds scratch it up with their claws at the foot of the trees where they roost, their sight being limited.

“ Do ye look about for a means to cross over the salty waves ; having found Vaidehi, return, your purpose accomplished. Now I desire to be taken by you to the shore of the sea, the abode of Varuna ; I will there perform the water ritual for the spirit of my high-souled brother, who has gone to the celestial abode.”

At those words those mighty monkeys carried Sampati, whose wings had been burnt, to the shore of the ocean, after which they brought back that King of the Birds to the Vindhya Mountain ; and, having received the information concerning Sita, they experienced great joy.

## CHAPTER 59

### *He encourages them to pursue their Quest*

HEARING these words, sweet as nectar, uttered by the Vulture King, the monkey chiefs were filled with relief.

Then Jambavan, the foremost among the apes, with all the monkeys, rising from the ground, said to the Vulture King :—  
“ Where is Sita ? Who has seen her ? Who has carried away Mithila’s daughter ? Do thou tell us all this, and thus be the

<sup>1</sup> Vainateya—The Eagle Garuda, said to be Vishnu’s messenger and vehicle.

<sup>2</sup> Implying by sending the monkeys he would be avenged on Ravana.

<sup>3</sup> Suparna—another name for Vainateya or Garuda.

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means of saving the dwellers in the woods. Who is able to forget the power of the arrows of Dasaratha that fly with the speed of lightning and those that are loosed by Lakshmana ? ”

Then Sampati, once again consoling those monkeys who had risen from their fasting and who were all attention to what was being related concerning Sita, well pleased, said to them :—

“ Hear how I came to learn of Sita’s abduction at this place and who it was that told me where that large-eyed lady could be found ! It is a long time since I fell on to this inaccessible mountain, many miles in extent. Now I am old and feeble in life and limb ; in this condition my son, named Suparshwa, the best of birds, brought me food regularly. If the Gandharvas are extremely pleasure loving and the serpent race prone to anger and the deer exceedingly timid, we, in our turn, are voracious.

“ One day, tormented with hunger, I demanded food and my son flew off at sunrise to procure it, but returned at night without any flesh. He, the increaser of my delight, had grown tired of searching for nourishment and in order to propitiate me said in all sincerity :—

“ ‘ My dear father, wishing to bring thee thine accustomed portion, I flew into the air and stationed myself near the approach of the Mahendra Mountain in order to obstruct the passage of thousands of creatures who range the sea. There I was, looking down, guarding the pass, when suddenly I observed someone resembling a mass of collyrium, carrying a woman as beautiful as the dawn. Seeing them, I resolved to seize them for my prey, but he humbly implored me in peaceful accents to let him pass. None on earth, not even the wicked, devour the peaceful willingly, how much less a creature like myself ! He passed on quickly, pushing away the air, as it were, with his energy. Thereafter, those beings that inhabit space approached me and paid obeisance to me and the great Rishis said to me :—

“ ‘ ‘ By good fortune Sita still lives ! It is well for thee that he has passed by thee with this woman.’ ”

“ ‘ Then the glorious Siddhas addressed me and informed me that it was Ravana, the King of the Demons, whom I had seen with the consort of Rama, the son of Dasaratha, the daughter of Janaka, who, her silken attire torn, overcome with an excess

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of grief, her hair falling about her, was calling the names of "Rama" and "Lakshmana". Thus, O My Father, is how the time has passed.'

"All this did Suparshwa tell me, and even on hearing it I did not consider exerting my strength, for without wings, how can a bird undertake anything? But hear how I can help you with my word and knowledge, so that you can manifest your prowess! By my speech and my experience I will do what is agreeable to you. I shall make the concern of the son of Dasaratha my concern, do not doubt it. Possessed as you are of intelligence, energy and wisdom, incapable of being overcome even by the Gods, you have been sent here by the King of the Monkeys. The arrows of Rama and Lakshmana furnished with heron plumes are able to destroy the Three Worlds. Although the ten-necked Ravana is endowed with strength and energy, yet assuredly none can resist your united efforts! There is no need for further delay. Now accomplish your purpose. The wise, such as you, are not dilatory in their undertakings."

### CHAPTER 60

#### *The Story of the Ascetic Nishakara*

WHEN the vulture had offered oblations of water for the spirit of his brother and performed his ablutions, the monkey chiefs sat down on that marvellous mountain, placing him in their midst.

Then Sampati, in order to reassure them, said cheerfully to Angada, who was seated surrounded by all the monkeys who escorted him:—"Listen to me with attention and in silence, O Monkeys, and I will tell you truly how I came to know of Maithili.

"A long time ago, I fell on the summit of the Vindhya Mountain, O Irreproachable Prince, my wings scorched by the heat of the sun, which consumed them with its rays. On regaining consciousness at the end of six days, faint and bereft of strength, looking round, I was unable to distinguish anything. Nevertheless on scanning the lakes, rocks, rivers, ponds, woods and countries, my memory returned and I reflected, 'This



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mountain filled with cheerful birds, containing deep caves and innumerable ridges is certainly the Vindhya Peak on the shores of the southern sea.'

"Here lay a sacred hermitage revered by the Gods themselves, where a Sage named Nishakara, of severe austerities, dwelt; since that time, that saint conversant with virtue has ascended to heaven.

"I passed eight thousand years on this mountain. Then not having seen that ascetic, crawling slowly and painfully down from that high peak to the ground covered with sharp pointed grass, eager to see that sage, I rejoined him with great difficulty. Formerly Jatayu and I visited that sage many times.

"In that neighbourhood, soft and fragrant breezes blew and there was no tree without flowers or fruit. Approaching that sacred hermitage, desirous of seeing the blessed Nishakara, I waited at the foot of a tree. Then, at a distance, I beheld that Rishi, blazing with effulgence, who, having performed his ablutions, was returning towards the north.

"As all living beings surround a giver, so was he surrounded by bears, srimaras, tigers, lions and snakes of various kinds. And when they observed that the saint had entered his hermitage, they all went away, as when a king retires, the ministers who have escorted him withdraw.

"The Sage, on seeing me, was pleased, and retiring into his hermitage for a while, came out again and enquired as to my welfare. He said:—'O My Friend, on account of thy discoloured plumes, I am unable to recognize thee; thy two wings have been scorched by fire and thy frail frame is shaken by gasps. In former times, I knew two vultures resembling the wind in speed, who were brothers, able to change their shape at will. Thou art, I know, the elder, Sampati, and Jatayu is thy younger brother. Both assuming human shape were wont to massage my feet with their hands.

"'By what disease hast thou been afflicted? From whence comes the loss of thy wings? Who has inflicted this punishment on thee? Do thou tell me all!'"

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### CHAPTER 61

#### *Sampati tells his Story to the Sage Nishakara*

THEREUPON Sampati related to the ascetic the whole of his fearful, arduous and rash act of flying towards the sun :—

“ O Blessed One, the wounds I have received, the shame I feel and the exhaustion I experience, all prevent me from entering into a lengthy narrative.

“ From pride in our power of flight, Jatayu and I, in order to test each other's powers, vowing in the presence of the sages on Mt. Kailasha that we would follow the sun till it set behind the Astachala Mountain, flew into the sky. Reaching a great height together, we looked down on the earth with its various cities that appeared like chariot wheels. Sometimes the sound of musical instruments reached us, at others the tinkling of ornaments. In certain places we saw many damsels clad in red who were singing.

“ Passing rapidly through the air, we followed the path of the sun and observed a forest intersected with green rides ; the mountains appeared like pebbles and the rivers like threads binding the earth ; Himavat, Vindhya and that mighty mountain, Meru resembled elephants standing in a pond.

“ Nevertheless we were perspiring freely and were filled with anxiety and extremely fatigued, no longer being able, in our bewilderment, to distinguish between the south, west or the quarter presided over by Fire ; the earth seemed to us to have been consumed by flames, as at the end of the world period. My mind and my eyes failing, with a violent effort I fixed them on the sun and with great difficulty succeeded in doing so. The blazing orb seemed to us much larger than the earth in extent, and at that instant, Jatayu, without speaking to me, began to fall. Seeing this, I flew down from the sky and covered him with my wings, in consequence of which my brother was not burnt, but I, in my arrogance was scorched and thrown out of the wind's course. I surmised that Jatayu had fallen in

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Janasthana, but my wings scathed, deprived of strength, I fell on the Vindhya Mountain.

“ Bereft of my dominion, my brother, my wings and my power, I now long to hurl myself headlong from the summit of this mountain and put an end to my existence.”

### CHAPTER 62

#### *Sampati learns where Sita is from the Sage Nishakara*

“ HAVING spoken thus to that foremost of Sages, in my distress, I began to weep, and that blessed One, reflecting for a while, said to me :—

“ ‘ Thy two wings with their feathers will grow again and thou wilt recover thy sight, thine energy and thy prowess. Having learnt it from the Puranas and foreseen it by mine ascetic power, I know that a great event is about to take place.

“ ‘ It concerns a certain king, named Dasaratha of the race of Ikshwaku, to whom a son, full of valour, will be born by the name of Rama. He will repair to the forest with his brother Lakshmana, having been constrained to do so by his sire.

“ ‘ The son of Nairriti, Ravana, the King of the Titans, incapable of being slain by Gods or Danavas, will bear off his consort from the forest of Janasthana. And, albeit tempted by delicious viands and objects of enjoyment and desire, that noble and illustrious one, overcome by grief, will not partake of them. Then Vasava learning of this will offer her ‘ payasa ’ resembling ambrosia that the Gods themselves only obtain with difficulty. Receiving this food, Maithili, knowing it to come from Indra, will offer part of it to Rama, by pouring it on the ground, saying : — ‘ Whether my husband or his younger brother still live or have attained the celestial state, may this food be acceptable to them.’

“ ‘ Rama’s envoys having been sent hither, it will be for thee to inform them of the facts relating to Sita, O Airy Traveller ! Do not go hence for any reason, but whither canst thou go in this condition ? Wait for the time and place ; thou shalt recover thy wings. I am able this very day to furnish thee with

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wings but by waiting here thou canst render a service to the worlds. Even so, thou shalt be doing thy duty to the two princes, the brahmins, thy spiritual preceptors, the sages and Indra. I also am desirous of beholding the two brothers, Rama and Lakshmana, after which I shall yield up my life.'

"Thus did that great Rishi, conversant with the nature of all things, speak to me."

### CHAPTER 63

#### *The Wings of Sampati grow once more*

"HAVING consoled me with these words and many others, the eloquent ascetic took leave of me and re-entered his hermitage. Thereafter I crawled slowly out of the cave and scaled the Vindhya Mountain to wait for you. Since that time, a whole century has passed, and, keeping the words of that hermit in my heart, I await the time and place.

"Nishakara has ascended to heaven and I, distracted by many thoughts, have been consumed with grief. When the idea of death comes to me, I put it away, remembering the words of the Sage. The determination he inspired in me to preserve my life dissolves my distress, as a flame in a lit brazier dispels the darkness.

"Though fully conversant with the power of the evil-hearted Ravana, yet I approached my son saying:—'Hearing her lamentations and knowing these two princes to be deprived of her, how is it that thou didst not free Sita?' In my affection for King Dasaratha I was displeased with my son."

As Sampati was speaking thus to the monkeys, his wings suddenly began to grow again in the presence of those dwellers in the woods. Thereupon seeing his body covered with tawny feathers, he experienced an immense joy and said to those monkeys:—"By the grace of Nishakara, that Sage of immeasurable power, my wings, that had been scorched by the sun's rays, have grown again and the prowess I possessed in my youth has returned. To-day I have regained my strength

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and vigour. Do you spare no effort to find Sita ; the recovery of my wings is a pledge of your success."

Having spoken thus to the monkeys, Sampati, the foremost of birds, anxious to ascertain his powers of flight, flew up to the mountain top. Hearing his words, those mighty monkeys were delighted and confident of their success, prepared to demonstrate their valour.

With the speed of the wind those foremost of monkeys, intent upon finding Sita, the daughter of Janaka, set out towards the south to the quarter dominated by Abhijit.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER 64

#### *The Monkeys are disconcerted at the sight of the Ocean*

THUS informed by the King of the Vultures, the monkeys, endowed with the strength of lions, began to leap about, emitting cries of delight.

Hearing from Sampati that Ravana would be slain, the happy monkeys reached the sea, anxious to discover Sita. And coming to that place, those redoubtable warriors beheld the ocean, the mirror of the whole world.

Arriving at the northern side of the southern sea, those exceedingly powerful and heroic monkeys halted there. And seeing the ocean which at times appeared to be asleep, at others playful, sometimes covered with huge waves and thronged with aquatic animals, causing their hair to stand on end, those foremost of monkeys were amazed and became despondent. Beholding that ocean incapable of being traversed, even as the sky itself, the monkeys began to lament, crying : " What is now to be done ? "

Then the foremost of the monkeys, the mighty Angada, seeing the despair of the army at the sight of the sea, began to reassure those warriors afflicted with terror, saying :—

" One should never give way to agitation, of all things it is

<sup>1</sup> Abhijit—the name of a constellation. Some Commentators translate it as meaning " he who is to be conquered " implying the region in which Ravana was to be found.

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the most fatal : agitation destroys a man even as a provoked serpent doth a child. He who, when the time is ripe for displaying his valour, becomes agitated, will grow weak and fail to attain his object."

The night having passed, Angada took counsel with the older monkeys, and that monkey host surrounding him resembled the hosts of the Maruts surrounding Vasava. Who, save Bali's son or Hanuman was capable of maintaining discipline amongst those troops ?

Having called the elders together in company with the army, the fortunate Angada, the subduer of his foes, saluting them, spoke words fraught with good sense, saying :—

" Who amongst you is of sufficient stature to cross the ocean ? Who is able to carry out the commands of Sugriva, the conqueror of his foes ? Which valiant monkey can leap the four hundred miles and deliver the leaders of the monkeys from their great anxiety ? By whose favour shall we, crowned with success and content, return and behold our wives, our sons and our homes ? Who will enable us to meet Rama, the mighty Lakshmana and that dweller in the woods, Sugriva, with a light heart ? If there be any monkey capable of leaping over the ocean, then may he show his blessed form to us and deliver us from fear ! "

Hearing Angada's speech, no one uttered a word and the entire monkey host appeared stunned. Then that foremost of monkeys once more addressed them saying :—

" O Ye Excellent Warriors, of tried valour, unimpeachable family and worthy of honour, say how far each of you is able to leap over the sea without any being able to hinder you ! "

### CHAPTER 65

*The Leaders of the Monkeys each state what they are able to accomplish*

HAVING listened to Angada's words, those Chiefs of Monkeys, each in turn, began to dilate on what he was able to accomplish—Gaya, Gavaksha, Gavaya, Sharabha, Gandhamadana, Mainda,

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Dvidida and Angada as also Jambavan. Gaya speaking first, said :—

“I can leap a hundred miles !” and Gavaksha said :—“I can leap two hundred !” Then the monkey Sharabha said to his companions :—“I am able to leap three hundred miles, O Monkeys !” thereafter Rishabha said, “I can undoubtedly cross over four hundred miles !” and the mighty Gandhamadana said “I can leap five hundred miles !” In his turn the monkey, Mainda, said “And I, six hundred miles” and the illustrious Dvidida “Without difficulty I can leap over seven hundred miles !” Then Sushena, full of energy, the best of monkeys said, “I declare that I can leap eight hundred miles !”

And as they were speaking thus, the oldest of them, Jambavan, offering salutations to them all, spoke in this wise :—“Formerly I, also, had the power of motion but now I am advanced in years. Nevertheless in the present situation, nothing should be overlooked to assure the success of both Rama’s and the King of Monkeys’ mission : I shall therefore leap three hundred miles. There is no doubt whatever about this.” Then Jambavan, addressing all those monkeys, added : “Alas ! I have assuredly not the strength for that ! Of old, I circumambulated the eternal Vishnu when he covered the world in three strides at the sacrifice of Virochana’s son ; now, however, I am old and tire quickly. When I was young, my energy was great and unmatched ; to-day, I can only go as far as I have told you, which is not sufficient to bring success to our undertaking.”

Thereupon the sagacious Angada, bowing to that mighty monkey, addressed him in pregnant words, saying : “I am able to leap these four hundred miles easily but should I be able to return ? Nothing is certain !”

Thereat Jambavan answered that excellent monkey and said : “O Foremost of Monkeys, thy power of motion is well known, but art thou able to cross over eight hundred miles ?<sup>1</sup> It is not fitting that thou shouldst do so. My Dear Son, the master must in no way be commanded by his servants ; it is for thee to order this expedition. Thou art our leader and our only good. The head of the army is, as it were, the wife, who should constantly be protected ; this is thy rôle, O Dear Child. One

<sup>1</sup> That is, there and back.

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should take care of the root of a thing, this is the practice of men of experience ; the root being sound, the juices that have for their purpose the maturing of the fruit will be safeguarded. Thou art the essential part of this undertaking and, O Subduer of Thy Foes, thou, furnished with wisdom and valour, art the principle underlying it. Thou art our superior and the son of our superior, O Excellent One ; with thy support we shall be able to accomplish our mission."

Thus, in his great wisdom, Jambavan spoke and that mighty monkey born of Bali, Angada, answered him saying :—

" If I do not go nor any among these powerful monkeys does so, then undoubtedly we must begin our supreme fast once more, for if we return without having fulfilled the commands of that lord of the monkeys, then I do not see how we can hope to preserve our lives. Whether he show clemency or wrath, he is the chief of the monkeys and to disregard his will means death. In this matter no other alternative is possible ; therefore it is for you who are able to see clearly to reflect upon it."

Thus spoke Angada and that powerful and heroic monkey, Jambavan, answered him in felicitous words saying :—

" O Warrior, this mission will be carried out without obstruction ! I will call on the one who is able to accomplish it."

Thereupon that heroic monkey sent for the foremost of the apes, Hanuman, who was sitting tranquilly apart.

## CHAPTER 66

*Jambavan appeals to Hanuman to sacrifice himself for the good of all*

PERCEIVING the discouragement of that great army composed of hundreds and thousands of monkeys, Jambavan said to Hanuman :—

" O Warrior, foremost among the multitude, thou who art versed in the scriptures, why art thou sitting apart, silent ? In courage and strength, thou art the equal of Rama and Lakshmana and of the King of the Monkeys himself, O Hanuman !



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“Arishtanemi’s<sup>1</sup> son, the mighty Vainateya, the illustrious Garuda is the foremost of all winged creatures. Many a time I have seen that all-powerful bird of immense wings and exceeding energy bearing away serpents from the ocean ; the strength that is in his wings resembles the might and vigour of thine arms ; none can withstand thee. Thine energy, intelligence, courage and loyalty sets thee apart from the rest of beings, therefore prepare thyself to cross the ocean.

“The most noble of all the Apsaras, Punjika-Thala, under the name of Anjana, became the wife of the monkey Kesarin. She was renowned in the three worlds and her beauty was unequalled on earth. As a result of a curse, O Friend, she was born in the monkey race, able to change her form at will.

“Once that daughter of the king among the monkeys, Kunjara, having assumed the form of a woman radiant with youth and beauty, adorned with garlands of various kinds, clad in silk, was wandering about on the summit of a mountain, which resembled a mass of clouds in the rainy season.

“And it happened that the God of the Wind stole away the red-bordered yellow robe of that large-eyed maiden, who stood on the mountain top. Then Maruta perceived her rounded, well-proportioned thighs and her breasts touching each other and her amiable and pleasing mien. Beholding that youthful woman of lovely limbs and slender waist, her whole being radiant with beauty, he was filled with desire and beside himself, enveloping that irreproachable lady in his arms, Manmatha embraced her.

“In her distress, Anjana, faithful to her conjugal vows, cried out :—‘Who desires to sever the ties of a woman devoted to her lord?’ Hearing these words, the Wind-God answered, ‘I do not wish to wrong thee, O Lady of Lovely Hips, let not thy heart be troubled. By embracing thee and entering into thee thou shalt bear a son endowed with strength and intelligence, of immense energy, of noble nature, possessed of vigour and courage and in agility and speed equal to myself.’

“These words pleased thy mother and she gave birth to thee in a cave, O Foremost of Monkeys.

<sup>1</sup> Arishtanemi—A name of Garuda meaning “the felly of whose wheel is unscathed”.

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"While still a child, thou didst see the sun rise over the great forest and taking it to be a fruit sought to seize it. Bounding into the air, thou didst mount up for a thousand yojanas, O Great Monkey and, though the burning rays of the sun beat upon thee, thou didst not falter. Seeing thee rushing through space, Indra, full of wrath, hurled this thunderbolt at thee, whereupon, falling, thou didst fracture thy left jaw on the point of a rock from which arises thy name, Hanuman.<sup>1</sup> Observing thee in this state, Vayu the Destroyer, the Bearer of Fragrance,<sup>2</sup> in the height of anger, ceased to blow throughout the Three Worlds.

"Then all the Gods were distressed on account of the calamity that has befallen the worlds and these Lords of the Universe sought to pacify the wrathful Wind-god, whereupon Pavana being placated, Brahma accorded thee the boon of invulnerability in combat. Seeing how thou didst sustain the impact of the thunderbolt, that God of a Thousand Eyes was pleased with thee and also conferred an excellent boon on thee, saying :— 'Thou shalt not die till thou desireth to do so ! Thou, endowed with extreme vigour, the son of Kesarin, resembling the Wind God in energy, art born of his loins and equal to him in speed'. O Friend, we are lost, but thou, possessed of skill and courage, art in our midst a second Lord of the Monkeys.

"In the time when Vishnu covered the world with three strides, I, O Child, circumambulated the earth with its mountains, forests and woods, one and twenty times. Then commissioned by the Gods, we gathered all the herbs which (when cast into the sea) produced the nectar of immortality and at that time our strength was great. Now I am old and my prowess has deserted me, but thou, endowed with every virtue art amongst us. Employ thy valour, O Hero, for thou art most fitted to do so. Bestir thyself and cross the vast ocean, O Redoubtable Monkey ; the entire monkey host is eager to behold thy prowess. Arise and leap over the mighty sea, for thou surpasseth all beings in motion. Canst thou remain indifferent to the despair of all the monkeys ? Put forth thy strength, as did Vishnu when traversing the Three Worlds with three strides, O Lion among Monkeys ! "

<sup>1</sup> Hanuman—"He of the fractured jaw".

<sup>2</sup> The Wind-god.

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Thus exhorted by the foremost of monkeys, Hanuman, renowned for his great might, the son of the Wind, assumed a form preparatory to crossing the sea that gladdened the hearts of those monkeys.

### CHAPTER 67

#### *Hanuman prepares to go to Lanka*

SEEING that extremely agile leader of monkeys stretching himself in preparation for crossing the four hundred miles of sea, the monkeys, renouncing all despondency, were filled with delight and began to shout and praise the heroism of Hanuman.

And, struck with amazement, beings from every sphere rejoiced unitedly, even as when they beheld the Lord Himself displaying his powers, when taking the three strides.

Thus acclaimed, the mighty Hanuman expanded in size and waved his tail in pleasure, demonstrating his strength. Applauded by the older monkeys and filled with energy, he assumed an unparalleled shape, like a lion that stretches himself at the mouth of a rocky cavern, and that Son of Maruta began to yawn and the mouth of that intelligent monkey resembled a blazing brazier or a smokeless fire.

Rising in the midst of those monkeys, his hair standing on end for joy, he paid obeisance to the older leaders and said to them :—  
“ I am the son of him who shatters the mountain peaks and is the friend of fire, the mighty and incommensurable Vayu, who circulates in space, Maruta, of impetuous bounds, rapid pace and great soul. A thousand times am I able without pausing, to encircle Meru, that colossus that seems to lick the heavens. With my strong arms, churning up the sea, I can inundate the world with its mountains, rivers and lakes ; with my thighs and legs, I can cause the ocean, the abode of Varuna with its great denizens, to overflow. I can encircle Vainateya, revered by all, who feeds on serpents, a thousand times while he courses once through space. What is more, I am able to reach the sun which rises in glory crowned with rays, before it sinks in the west and return without touching the earth. I can leap beyond the

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stars and planets, suck up the ocean and rive the earth ; I can shatter the mountains with my bounds and in the immeasurable energy of my leaping I can cause the sea to overflow. When I mount into the sky, flowers from countless shrubs and trees will be borne away by me on my aerial course this day and studded with flowers my path shall resemble the Milky Way.

“ And, O Monkeys, all beings shall behold me coursing through the air, encompassing the firmament, now rising, now descending, as it were devouring space. I shall scatter the clouds, shatter the mountains and dry up the ocean with my constant leaping. My powers are equal to the eagle’s or the wind ; I know of none that surpasses the King of the Birds, the Wind-god or myself. In the twinkling of an eye, I shall float through the air like lightning from a cloud. While crossing the sea, my form will resemble Vishnu’s taking his three strides. My heart foretells that I shall encounter Vaidehi, therefore rejoice. Equal to Maruta in motion and Garuda in speed, I shall cover ten thousand miles ; this is my firm conviction. I am able to wrest the ‘amrita’ from Indra, armed with his thunder-bolt or from Brahma himself. Be assured, that having turned Lanka upside down, I shall return ! ”

That monkey of immeasurable vigour roared thus, and astounded, the monkeys gazed on him with joy ; and hearing those words that dissipated the distress of his kindred, that foremost of monkeys, Jambavan, transported with delight, said :—“ O Hero ! O Son of Kesarin ! O Offspring of the Wind ! Thou hast dispelled the immense anxiety of thy fellows, and these foremost of monkeys assembled here will perform acts tending to thy welfare. By the grace of the Sages, the approval of our elders and the blessing of our spiritual preceptors do thou cross the ocean. We will stand on one foot awaiting thy return. On thee depend the lives of all the inhabitants of the woods ! ”

Then that tiger of the monkeys said to those rangers of the woods :—“ None in this world will be able to sustain the force of my leaping. Here is the mountain Mahendra with its compact mass of rocks and high escarpments, it is from its summit that I shall spring. With its trees of varied fragrance that cover it and its many crags, it will be able to bear my weight, when I prepare to leap over four hundred miles.”

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With these words that monkey, the scourge of his foes, born of Maruta, whose equal he was, scaled that monarch of mountains, carpeted with flowers of every kind and grassy swards ranged by deer, containing flowering creepers and trees laden with fruit and blossoms, frequented by lions and tigers and herds of intoxicated elephants maddened with ichor ; there flocks of birds trilled and waterfalls tumbled on every side.

Ascending that mountain, that foremost of monkeys, equal to Mahendra in power, began to wander from one crest to another and crushed between the arms of that high-souled one, that great mountain emitted a loud clamour, like a mighty elephant that has been attacked by a lion and waters gushed out from the scattered rocks and deer and elephants were seized with fear, whilst the giant trees shook.

Its spacious uplands were deserted by the pairs of Gandharvas engaged in drinking and dalliance, the birds flew away and the bands of Vidyadharas fled from the high plateaus ; the huge serpents hid themselves in terror and the cliffs and spars broke away. With its serpents hissing, their bodies half issuing from their holes, the mountain shone, as if decorated by pennants. The Rishis in fear and agitation fled from that support of the earth so that it resembled a wayfarer in a vast forest, deserted by his companions.

And that agile and valiant monkey, endowed with great speed, the destroyer of his foes, filled with an exalted purpose, had already reached Lanka in thought.

END OF KISHKINDHA KANDA



